

SANDY ZIPP ON THE BATTLE OF SAN FRANCISCO

# In These Times

INDEPENDENT NEWS & VIEWS

April 2, 2001

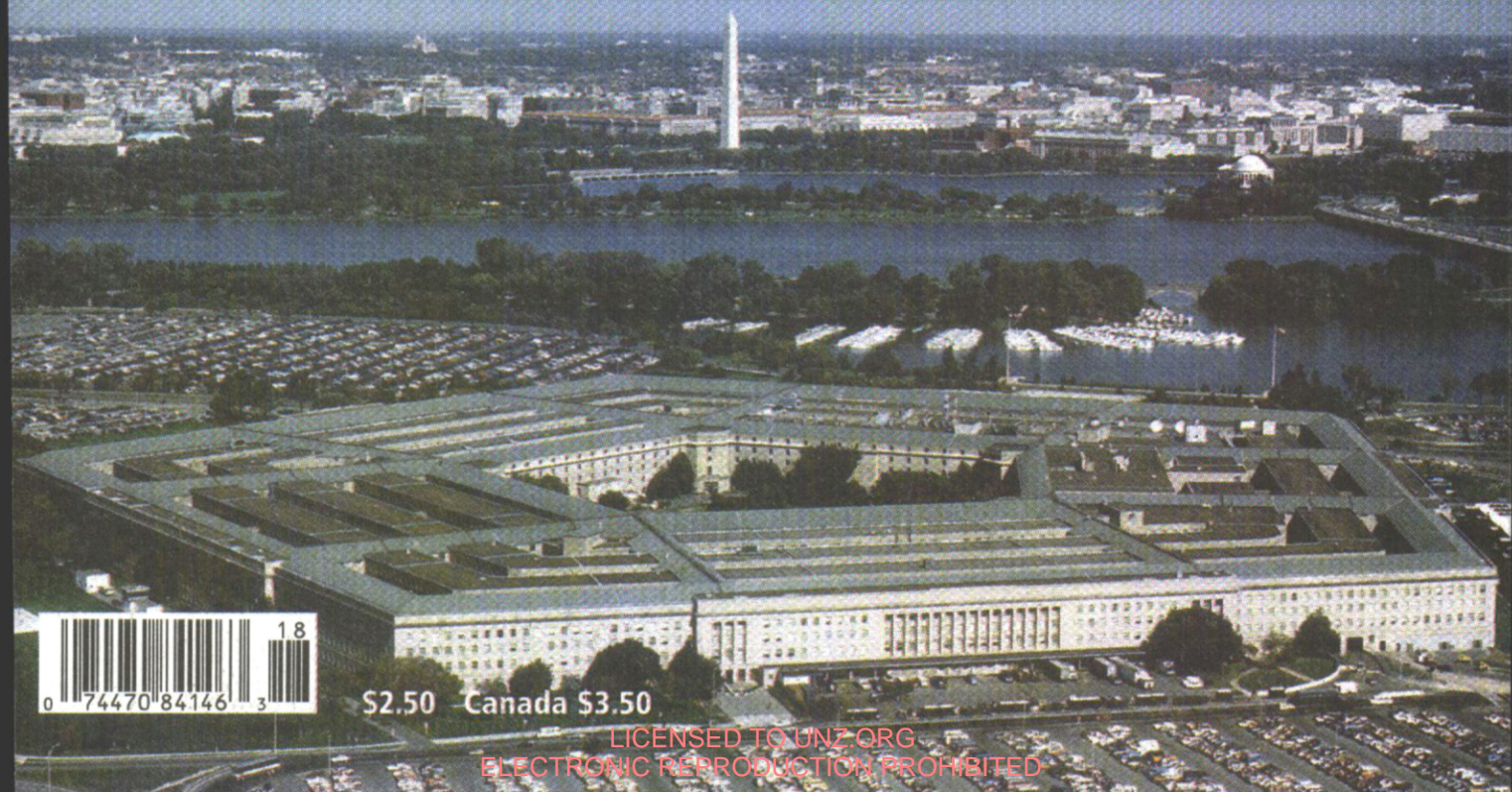
## PENTAGON SPENDING SPREE

10 MYTHS ABOUT THE DEFENSE BUDGET

BY LAWRENCE J. KORB

THE NEW MARSHALL PLAN

BY JASON VEST



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# In These Times

INDEPENDENT NEWS & VIEWS

"... with liberty and justice for all"

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## Publisher's Notes

**O**n February 27, George W. Bush made his first speech before Congress and presented his priorities for the next four years—tax cut now, consequences later. The following day progressives gathered under the banner of the Campaign for America's Future to rage against the tax cut and sketch an alternative set of priorities (see "Setting the Agenda," page 3). Here's some of what was said—and what wasn't.

Bush touted his tax cut as evidence of his policy of fairness. Progressives agree that there should be some sort of a tax cut, but point out that under the Bush plan the wealthiest 1 percent would get 43 percent of the benefits. Progressives also spoke of the need for new social investment.

Bush also proposes to let every senior on Medicare "choose a health care plan that offers prescription drugs." Progressives fear that this is a move to privatize part of Medicare. They noted that we need a health care plan for uninsured children, and one way to get this would be to expand Medicare to provide those services.

Bush said little about race and nothing about gender equality. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-Illinois) lamented the failure of recent administrations to fight for fundamental rights, going so far as accusing the Clinton administration of "race entertainment." Heidi Hartmann, president of the Institute for Women's Policy Research, noted that while more women than ever are working, the male-female wage gap actually has increased in recent years.

Bush failed to address last year's flawed presidential election. Rep. John Conyers (D-Michigan) spoke of the electoral abuses suffered by people of color throughout the country, not just in Florida. Reforms are needed now, he says, while the memories of last year's electoral outrages are still fresh. Nor did Bush mention campaign finance reform. But Ellen Miller of Public Campaign calmly detailed the obscene amounts of money that poured into the last election (for example, corporations outspent labor by a ratio of 15-to-1). Calling for publicly financed elections, she noted that passage of the McCain-Feingold would ban just 15 percent of the political money spent on the election.

But the assembled progressives failed to include on their agenda a number of pressing issues. Although Bush proclaimed, "We can produce more energy at home while protecting our environment, and we must"—the progressives didn't touch on this. Do we really trust the Bush administration to develop a balanced energy policy?

Neither Bush nor the speakers at the conference addressed the failed drug war. Why not? It's a classist and racist policy that hasn't stopped drug abuse, has wasted billions of tax dollars and threatens to involve us in a war in Colombia.

Bush mentioned the environment briefly, but he did not address the question of how he plans to deal with global warming and the other major threats to the environment. At the conference, progressives had little to say about the environment other than noting the need for new cooperation between environmentalists and labor on "how to protect workers from the consequences of environmental policy."

Bush spoke only in generalities about the military, but what he did say was disturbing. He indicated that the Defense Department is preparing a new military vision and consequently his budget "makes a down payment on the research and development that will be required," including development of the National Missile Defense system. What's not spelled out is the price tag for all this, or the impact these new weapons will have on our relationships

**Bush has presented his priorities for the next four years. It looks like our work is cut out for us.**

with the European Union, Russia, China and the nuclear wannabes.

Unfortunately, the progressives looking toward America's future had no response to these alarming proposals. No one asked, "Whatever happened to the idea of the peace dividend?"

It seems like our work is cut out for us. As always, I look forward to hearing from you at [bburnett@inthesetimes.com](mailto:bburnett@inthesetimes.com).

*Bob Burnett*

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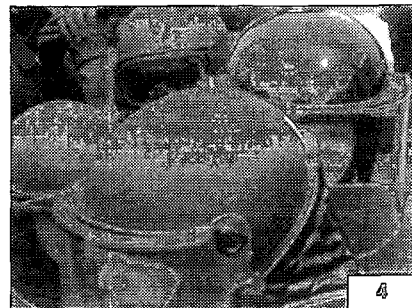
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# Letters

## Spin Doctors

While we greatly respect Barbara Seaman's other work, she is wrong in her assessment of Norplant ("Under My Skin," January 8). Her article is factually inaccurate, and her attacks on the Population Council are unfair and unwarranted. The Population Council has long been an advocate of voluntary choice of contraception, of balanced and complete information to patients and providers, of ethical conduct of clinical trials, and of women's reproductive health and rights.

Seaman should investigate the role of lawyers and journalists in the "demise" of a safe, effective, long-acting contraceptive. With a drumbeat of negative media over several years, it is no wonder that many women think using the implant "would be bad for them." Although many women have been involved in Norplant-related lawsuits in the United States, not one class action lawsuit was ever certified, and not one plaintiff has ever won her case.

Seaman contends that women were not told of possible side effects. This was one of the issues addressed in the lawsuits in the United States: In all cases, the court found that the distributor had adequately informed physicians about the method; it is the physician's responsibility to inform the patient.

In listing numerous possible side effects, Seaman also failed to note that these are side effects common to all hormonal methods, including the birth control pill. Without question, those women who have troubling bleeding problems should choose to have their implants removed, and the removals should be performed by competent and trained providers. Those women who find Norplant use acceptable should be able to obtain it and have removal on demand. Indeed, satisfied Norplant users around the world are now using their second set of implants.

Much is known about Norplant. At least 120 articles about efficacy, side effects and acceptability have been published. Seaman's allegations about the risk of ectopic pregnancy and the numbers of women who have had difficult removals are exaggerations; the article also ignores evidence about the safety of Norplant to infants of mothers who began breastfeeding six weeks after childbirth.

The article confuses clinical trials, over which sponsors have great control, with use following regulatory approval, over which sponsors have little control. It blames the contraceptive method instead of judges and legislators who ordered the implants used coercively in the United States. It condemns the FDA for not requiring patient

informed consent forms until recently, although Norplant has had such an informed consent since 1995.

The Population Council encourages the use of modern contraception by women and men in the exercise of free choice to regulate their own fertility. Adoption of contraception should always be a voluntary, informed choice, with the individual making the decision whether to use contraception, which method to use, when to use it, and when to stop or try another. While Norplant is not for all women, we at the Population Council believe in expanding all women's contraceptive options, not restricting them.

**Suellen Miller and Sandra Waldman**  
**The Population Council**  
**New York**

**Barbara Seaman replies:** I stand by everything I said. I urge the Population Council to reconsider its policy of blaming outside elements ("the feminists" ... "the media" ... "the lawyers" ... "the judges and legislators") when women turn away from flawed birth control technologies. Full disclosure is the only way to go. Women expect it now. And please ask Population Council scientist and Norplant developer Sheldon Segal and his cronies to stop belittling the women's health movement. It's almost 30 years since Segal attacked me in his *Family Planning Perspectives* cover story "Is Contraception a Male Chauvinist Plot?"

It's hard to take you seriously as a scientific organization when you persist in putting your own defensive "spin" on your mistakes. For example, a blue-ribbon study by the Columbia University School of Public Health ("Determinants of Early Implant Discontinuation Among Low-Income Women," *Family Planning Perspectives*, November/December 1996) states:

Our findings indicate that the impact of exposure to negative media coverage was relatively modest. ... Another key finding is that negative experiences associated with the implant clearly play a role in a woman's decision to discontinue method use. ... The most frequently cited main reasons for removal of the implant were menstrual side effects (28%) and headaches (19%), findings consistent with previous research. Approximately 10% of respondents cited arm discomfort or infection and another 9% cited weight changes (primarily weight gain) as their main reason for early removal. Seven percent attributed discontinua-

tion to mood changes, while 5% mentioned either hair loss, chest pains or negative media reports as their main reason for removal.

Regarding factual inaccuracies, it's you, not me, who perpetuate them, sometimes recklessly. For example, we know that hormone residues are found in the breast milk of Norplant users, but we have no idea what the long-range effects on the adult reproductive system of the nursing infant might turn out to be. It's too soon to tell. What's more, nursing mothers are unlikely to conceive, so why stick them with a hormonal contraceptive? History may well look back on this as a naive, ill-advised and shameful experiment, echoing the use of diethylstilbestrol (DES) in pregnant women during the postwar era, whose children's reproductive abnormalities—including cancer—were not uncovered for 25 years.

You say that I "blame the contraceptive method instead of judges and legislators who ordered the implants used coercively in the United States." To the contrary, my article acknowledges that: "In the United States, some judges, prison officials and state legislators have tried to mandate Norplant for women convicted of child abuse, as well as for poor women receiving welfare."

Fortunately, nearly all such attempts have been rebuffed or overturned by cooler heads in our democratic society. The area where Norplant users do perceive coercion is at the family planning clinic level. Out of 687 low-income Norplant users interviewed in New York, Texas and Pittsburgh over a two-year period, 40 percent anticipated or experienced that "cost barriers" could get in the way of having Norplant removed. The authors of that study, led by Drs. Debra Kalmuss and Andrew Davidson at the Center for Population and Family Health at Columbia University, urge that "family planning clinics need to make clear that they follow a policy of Norplant removal on demand, regardless of the patient's ability to pay."

In support of his beliefs, Davidson helps administer the Norplant Foundation Supply and Removal Program, which receives a couple of thousand phone calls a month. Most want removals.

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# Setting the Agenda

By David Moberg

For a conservative Republican, George W. Bush sounded a lot like a liberal (or at least a Clintonian) Democrat in his budget speech to Congress on February 27. He made promises about education, health care and Social Security. "It would have been a great speech, if he hadn't been lying," says Massachusetts Rep. Barney Frank.

But Bush's proposed tax cut alone was an adequate reminder that he wasn't telling the truth. Behind the liberal facade is class warfare—a scheme to redistribute more wealth to the wealthy and increase insecurity for the many, while protecting the prerogatives and power of corporations.

Bush's dissembling is further confirmation of what lay beneath the disappointing election results last fall: a progressive majority searching for a voice and a vehicle. Although they will need to stage defensive battles against the tax cut, progressives are ready to push their agenda even on the unfriendly terrain in Congress.

They may not win much immediately, but an assertive strategy will put pressure on wayward conservatives and centrists eager to cut a deal with Republicans and will help encourage the Democrats to adopt a more liberal strategy in upcoming elections. And if Democratic leaders and, more likely, progressive groups actually make the effort to educate and mobilize a real grassroots movement, the Bush years could become the launching pad for a period of real progressive reform in the near future.

The day after Bush's speech, the Campaign for America's Future pulled together in Washington roughly 500 people, mostly leaders in a wide range of progressive groups and unions, to discuss "the next agenda." The campaign, a small group founded by Robert Borosage and Roger Hickey in part to counterbalance the influence of the conservative Democratic Leadership Council, had planned the gathering to prod a future President Gore to the left. Despite the slight hitch in that scenario, the speak-

ers—including AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and Congressional Democrats like Paul Wellstone, Dick Durbin, Jan Schakowsky, Jesse Jackson Jr., Dennis Kucinich, George Miller and Maxine Waters—insisted that there was strong popular support for expanded health care, more spending on education, pay equity, public financing of elections, stronger protection of the right to organize, a higher minimum (or living) wage, and safeguards for workers rights and the environment in global economic agreements.

Bush, however, clearly has the upper hand, and liberals will find themselves hard pressed simply fighting against Republican outrages and Democratic defections. The "next agenda" speakers recognized that Bush could capture supposedly Democratic terrain if progressives do not effectively define compelling alternatives to Bush proposals, as well as criticize Bush's shortcomings, from school vouchers to Social Security privatization.

While the "next agenda" gathering was largely a policy-oriented call to

arms, there was frequent, refreshing recognition that no progressive agenda has a prayer without grassroots organizing across the country. Think tanks and Washington offices backed by direct-mail fundraising won't be enough.

At the same time, the progressive agenda should not be limited simply to issues that register well in polls and elections. Some issues, like combating national missile defense, may be more problematic than promising to save Social Security, but they are equally important to any well-conceived progressive agenda. One of the biggest challenges for the left, however, is creating cooperation and a broader sense of ideological community among the hun-

**The Bush years could become the launching pad for a period of real progressive reform.**

dreds of issue and constituency groups.

The Campaign for America's Future is not the vehicle to achieve that goal. But discussions like the one in Washington, soon to be taken around the country (and published in a book, *The Next Agenda: Blueprint for a New Progressive Movement*), and the network of grassroots leaders it hopes to pull together could help progressives take steps in that direction. ■

Terry LaBan





## Blame Canada

### Quebec City prepares to crack down on FTAA protests

By Darryl Leroux

QUEBEC CITY—Since the anti-WTO demonstrations in Seattle, police forces around the world increasingly have demonstrated their willingness to crack down on anti-globalization protests. Canadian officials are keeping such lessons in mind as they plan their own response to the upcoming Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, where tens of thousands of protesters are expected.

From April 20 to 22, Quebec City will host 34 heads of state for the summit, who will focus on finalizing the controversial Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement. The FTAA would extend NAFTA to every country in the Western Hemisphere except Cuba. The trade pact has been the subject of secretive negotiations since the first summit was held in Miami in 1994, and negotiators have set 2005 as the deadline for implementation.

The security measures planned for the summit are sweeping—it will be the largest police deployment in Canadian history. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) estimates that the overall budget for the police operation will be \$30 million. More than 5,000 officers are slated to work the summit, and the Canadian army is presently training 800 riot police just outside Quebec City.

Authorities have established a "security perimeter," a no-protest zone that will cover four square miles of downtown. In early spring, police plan to erect a fence along the streets that line the perimeter to block protesters from the meetings. What's more, the 25,000 people who reside or work in the security perimeter will have to show a pass to enter the area, as will the 5,000 official delegates and 3,000 accredited journalists. A plan to run criminal-

record checks on all Quebec residents receiving the pass was quickly shelved due to widespread public outrage.

At a November press conference, Serge Menard, Quebec's minister for public security, surprised many when he announced that Orsainville provincial prison will be emptied of its 600 inmates during the summit to make room for arrested protesters. Quebec officials plan to transfer all prisoners to other facilities across the province. Menard justified the need for such drastic police measures by saying, "If you want peace, you must prepare for war."

In December, the RCMP announced that it had rented all vacant apartments and houses within the security perimeter, and reserved all hotel accommodations within 55 miles to avoid leaving anything vacant for pro-

maze and onto the laps of government officials and business executives.

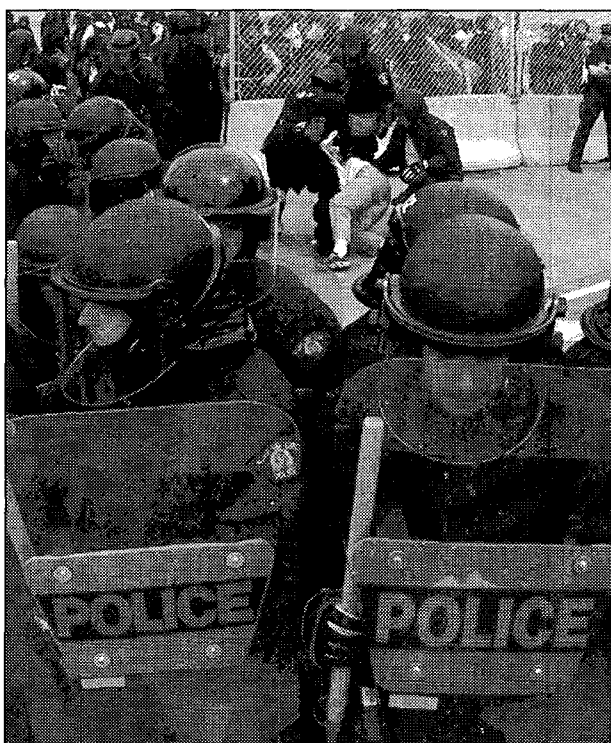
Canadian officials recently extended their oppressive policies to U.S. citizens. In a late January border incident, 10 New Yorkers en route to a meeting organized by the Summit of the Americas Welcoming Committee were denied entry into the country. Canadian border police searched their van, collecting and copying all documents pertaining to the mobilization against the summit.

More recently, former black panther Lorenzo Komboa Ervin of Kalamazoo, Michigan was denied entry into Canada after speaking about police brutality, racism and the FTAA at February events in Toronto, Montreal and Quebec City. Canadian immigration officials told Ervin that before he can re-enter Canada, he must provide evidence that he is no longer a "clear and present danger" to state security—even though he has been to Canada nearly 20 times in the past five years.

In Quebec City, the paranoia surrounding the summit is reaching a fever pitch. On February 4, two plainclothes police officers arrested three youths for handing out pamphlets denouncing the summit security's violation of civil rights. Mayor Jean-Paul L'Allier quickly apologized for the officers' actions once the story became public.

In response, the Rights and Liberties League of Quebec, one of the province's largest civil rights organizations, is forming a surveillance committee made up of lawyers and community members who will report on security measures, provide legal representation to arrested protesters and help those who encounter problems at the Canadian border.

Meanwhile, the RCMP continues to portray the summit as a "crisis situation," thereby justifying all police actions. When asked about the security measures infringing on civil rights, Julie Brongel, RCMP's spokeswoman for the summit said: "If they want to put this in a negative light, they're entitled to do so. But it's not going to change our methods." ■



A sign of things to come? Riot police in Windsor, Ontario prepare to make arrests during the meeting of the Organization of American States on June 4, 2000.

testers. The RCMP even forced out several NGOs that had reserved hotel and conference rooms a year in advance. They also plan to seal all sewer entrances within the security perimeter for fear of protesters finding their way through the underground



# Copter Stoppers

Protests expose defense industry's role in Colombia

By Hank Hoffman

STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT—Just before dawn on February 12, two dozen people lined up at the main gate of Sikorsky Aircraft, a defense contractor based here, and blocked the main entrance to the plant. Across the street, 75 people held banners proclaiming "Sikorsky kills Colombians."

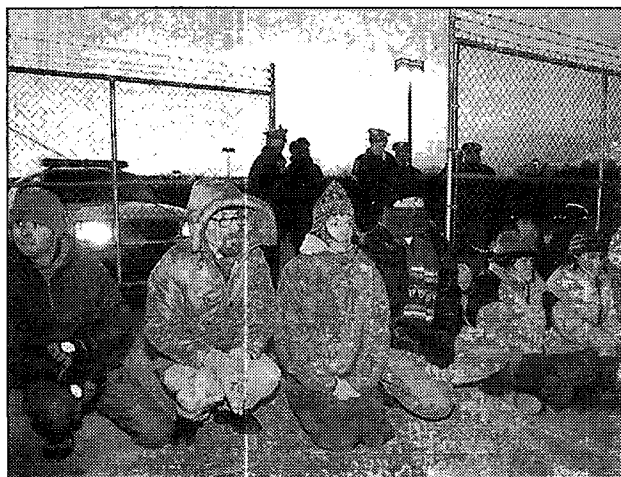
The action marked the first major display of civil disobedience at Sikorsky over the sale of Black Hawk helicopters to the Colombian military. The protest, called by Colombia Action Connecticut, included members of the Catholic Workers—a faith-based pacifist group—drug-law reformers and the Connecticut Global Action Network. At a previous protest in December, six people were arrested when they tried to deliver a letter to CEO Dean Borgman protesting Sikorsky's sale of the helicopters.

Concern over Colombia has grown since President Clinton signed a \$1.3 billion aid package last July. Defense contractors were the primary lobbyists for Plan Colombia, which includes 30 Sikorsky Black Hawk helicopters due to be delivered there by the end of this year.

The protesters tied up traffic for almost four miles. Many workers were visibly angry. "We're in favor of selling these Black Hawks," says Jeff Cederbaum, head of the Teamsters local that represents most Sikorsky employees. "We've actually been pushing our congressional delegation to make sure these go through. Our concern is making sure our members are working."

But at least a dozen passing motorists honked their horns in support. And after an hour and a half, protesters ended their blockade, without arrests. "We stopped business as usual," says Mark Colville, a resident of the New Haven Catholic Worker house. "I think we touched the consciences of people who work here. What they do with that is up to them."

The coalition plans to organize more blockades at Sikorsky. "I dread getting



Protesters block the entrance to Sikorsky Aircraft.

arrested and going to jail," adds Colville, who was arrested for the first time at the December action. "But I think it's necessary. There needs to be a dramatization of the fact that we're killing people daily in Colombia." ■

*A version of this story originally appeared in the New Haven Advocate.*

## Critical Condition

The deaths of eight inmates renew concerns about medical care inside California's prisons

By Silja J.A. Taiwi

CHOWCHILLA, CALIFORNIA—The deaths of eight female inmates within a seven-week period at a California women's prison have sparked a new round of inquiry into the controversy over adequate medical care in the state's prison system. Among the deceased was Pamela Coffey, 46, who died on December 2. Her cellmates say that correctional officers mocked her pleas for assistance a half-hour before her death.

Though no foul play is suspected in the deaths of the inmates at Central California Women's Facility (CCWF), the concentration of these deaths in November and December resulted in renewed insistence by several Bay Area prisoner advocacy groups that the California Department of Corrections

(CDC) must reform its health care system.

Three of the deaths were considered sudden and unexpected, says CDC spokeswoman Terry Thornton, while the remaining five women were terminally ill. Thornton also stresses that CCWF experiences higher annual death rates than other women's state prisons because inmates requiring more intensive medical attention are transferred there from other facilities.

But all of the eight recent deaths cry out for closer examination, according to Cynthia Chandler, an attorney and co-director of the Oakland-based Justice Network on Women, a nonprofit law center that provides women prisoners with legal services. Justice NOW represents many female inmates seeking compassionate release, which is an official recall of sentence recommended by the prison and granted by a judge for terminally ill prisoners.

Compassionate release became law in California in 1997. Prisoners, usually with the help of a lawyer, seek a compassionate release recommendation from a prison doctor. The prison warden takes the recommendation to the CDC director, who in turn must give it to a judge for final approval. The release can be turned down at any point in the process. Once the sentence is recalled, the prisoner is released to family or a medical facility.

Over the past several years, human rights groups have criticized both the CCWF and other California women's prisons for substandard medical care (see "Bad Medicine," January 8). A 1995 class action lawsuit, *Shumate v. Wilson*, accused prison administrators and medical staff at CCWF and Chino's California Institute for Women of cruel and unusual punishment and "deliberate indifference" to the health needs of inmates. In 1997, the state agreed to institute significant changes in the health care system and to submit to court-ordered monitoring. In August, the lawsuit was dismissed with the agreement of all parties involved.



Following the recent deaths, the CDC launched its own internal investigation in addition to hiring a team of University of California-Davis doctors to examine medical records. "There are several investigations looking at medical and custody issues in the events preceding the deaths," Thornton says. "We are just as anxious as everyone else to get answers. If there is any evidence of staff misconduct, those will be dealt with appropriately."

But activist groups—including Justice NOW and California Prison Focus—have demanded a completely independent investigation. State Sen. Richard G. Polanco (D-Los Angeles), chairman of the joint legislative committee on prison construction and operations, arranged a special hearing

on January 17 in Sacramento. The hearing was dominated by prison officials' testimony, and family members of the deceased were allowed to comment for just over an hour.

Among the deaths was that of Michelle Wilson, an HIV-positive woman serving a three-year sentence for prostitution. According to Chandler, Wilson arrived at CCWF on February 10, 2000 complaining of debilitating headaches. That month, doctors diagnosed her with a brain tumor of unknown origin. During the following six months, Wilson saw a neurosurgeon twice. Both times the examination could not take place, Chandler says, because the doctor did not receive the necessary medical files. In August, Wilson was finally diagnosed with a brain tumor, which had spread to her brain stem. Surgeons had only limited

success, and the growth in the brain stem proved inoperable.

Chandler last spoke with her client on October 13. At that time, Wilson said that doctors told her she had less than six months to live and they had recommended her for compassionate release. On December 4, Wilson's mother, Sandra Crawley, received a telegram saying her daughter had "expired." "They never even let me know that she was going into a hospital," Crawley says.

No recommendation for Wilson's compassionate release even exists in CDC records. "She received a community standard of care for her very complex and serious medical problems," Thornton says. "Contrary to what other people say, we are interested in providing good health care to inmates, and if we can't give it to them, we will get them to a place where they can get it."



## Appall-o-Meter

By David Futrelle

### Imelda's Shoeuseum 7.1

A decade and a half after she fled the Philippines in disgrace when her dictator husband was overthrown in a popular uprising, Imelda Marcos is trying to use her continuing notoriety to promote a righteous cause: the health and well-being of the shoe industry. The former first lady of the Philippines returned to the headlines recently after opening a shrine of sorts to famous footwear, much of it her own.

The Marikina City Footwear Museum features hundreds of shoes from Imelda herself, some of them shoes she left behind when she had to leave the country in such a hurry back in 1986. Museum officials hope the project will help to bring tourist money to Marikina—and to help support the local shoe industry, just as Imelda herself had done by buying shoes so extravagantly before her fall from grace. "This museum [is] making a subject of notoriety into an object of beauty," Imelda told *The Associated Press*. "Filipinos don't wallow in what is miserable and ugly. They recycle the bad into things of beauty."

### Black and White Case 8.2

The police officers didn't mace, beat and arrest a retired youth worker because he was black. They arrested him because

they thought he was a white man with a similar name. That, anyway, is the explanation police are giving in the wake of an incident in which James E. Parker—a black man in his fifties—was wrongfully arrested by Attleboro, Massachusetts cops looking for one James M. Parker—a white man who happens to be 20 years younger than his near-namesake.

According to the *Boston Globe*, the arresting officers (who reportedly had a sketch of the younger, more lightly pigmented Parker at hand) "soon realized the mistake," but nevertheless "charged the 55-year-old Parker with assaulting a police officer and disturbing the peace. Parker spent time in jail and a judge placed him on probation before prosecutors formally dismissed the charges six months later."

The chief of the Attleboro police department says he's sorry about the incident, though he denies that racism or racial profiling had anything to do with it. "This was truly an accident and I apologize to Mr. Parker for the inconvenience," Chief Ronald D. Sabourin told the *Globe*.

### Tooth and Consequences 4.4

Misguided policies of "zero tolerance" toward drugs and guns on school property have led school officials across the United States to mete out draconian pun-

ishments to students accused of such horrendous infractions as sharing aspirins or pointing fingers at other students and saying "bang." But if one Canadian parent is to be believed, school officials at the Northland School in Grouard, Alberta have done their American rivals one better—adopting a "zero tolerance" policy toward bad breath.

Colleen Auger says the principal of her daughter's school demanded she remove the 7-year-old from school because her breath was so bad—and because he feared her halitosis, apparently caused by several uncapped cavities, might be contagious. "I told them it's just a rotten tooth," Auger told the *Calgary Sun*. "The principal told me, 'It's best you take her home because the other kids could catch it.'"

For its part, the school denies suspending the foul-mouthed little girl, and says it is investigating the mother's complaint. Dental work is scheduled.



TERRY LABAN



In one instance, Thornton says, Madera Community Hospital was responsible for transferring Wilson's files to the neurosurgeon. "But we're willing to take part of the blame, I think," she says, "at least for the second time." Thornton had no comment on why Wilson's mother was not notified each time her daughter was hospitalized.

Prisoner advocacy groups point to these cases as prime examples how difficult it is to commute the sentences of terminally ill prisoners. Compassionate release cases have recently dwindled to their lowest point in a decade, despite state legislation in 1997 to encourage and streamline the process. In 1995, a total of 102 cases for men and women were initiated by prison doctors, and 41 sentences were "recalled" by judges, with a total of eight female prisoners receiving compassionate release. In 1999, the year that Democratic Gov. Gray Davis took office, only one woman had her sentence recalled.

The CDC did not offer an explanation for the significant drop in compassionate releases. Although complete statistics are not yet available for 2000, it appears that two women received compassionate releases. And on January 10, Justice NOW co-director Cassandra Shaylor was able to secure the first compassionate release of 2001 for Cherri Lewis, a 46-year-old woman dying of cancer. Lewis had been in prison since 1995 on robbery charges, and has joined her family to live out her remaining months.

While the case is a victory, of sorts, for Lewis and her family, Shaylor notes that it is more the exception than the norm. "I attribute that to the timing," she says. "In the wake of all these deaths, the CDC doesn't want anyone else to die on their watch. I hope that Cherri's compassionate release is a sign that the CDC is going to reverse their pattern of denying these kinds of requests."

"It's really important to point out that compassionate release is just one piece of an effective system of medical provision in a prison system," Shaylor adds. "It isn't the solution. If they were providing adequate medical care to women all along, we wouldn't end up in a situation where so many women are so seriously ill that they need to be considered for compassionate release." ■

## Street Lies

### Chicago homeless newspaper fights a corporate makeover

By Geeta Kharkar

CHICAGO—A corporate makeover threatens to turn *StreetWise*, Chicago's homeless newspaper, from a forum for local news and homeless advocacy into a watered-down, advertiser-friendly entertainment guide that many believe would undermine the organization's founding principles.

*StreetWise* was created in 1992 with the mission to "empower men and women who are homeless" and to help them "help themselves through the opportunities to earn a living and gain valuable job skills." The weekly paper's

people job and computer skills to help them find employment.

But executive director Anthony Oliver wants to take *StreetWise* in a different direction. He plans to form corporate partnerships and soften the editorial content because anti-corporate stories could discourage potential investors. In a press sheet promoting his "Socially Responsible Advertising" program, Oliver encourages advertisers to appeal to the "emotional edge" of consumers and use the paper "to publicize your company's philanthropic support of community organizations."

Oliver also plans to hang a video billboard outside of the *StreetWise* building to run the ads. Some staffers question the financial ethics of embarking on such an expensive new program for an already financially strapped organization. (Oliver could not be reached for comment.)

Associate editor Kari Lydersen (who is a frequent contributor to *In These Times*) says that Oliver's advertising-driven vision for *StreetWise* will hurt the very people the organization is there to help: the vendors. "It's symbolic of a general shift away from the newspaper and direct empowerment of vendors," she says. "More and more, vendors are seen only as a sales force."

According to editor Charity Crouse (who also has written for this magazine), Oliver's plan is a "180-degree turn" from what the editorial staff has tried to accomplish in the past two years. "We wanted to focus the paper as a journalistic news source," Crouse says, "to give the vendors a business product to sell, rather than just marketing the image of homelessness. To empower them rather than make them out to be victims."

The future of the vendors isn't the only thing in jeopardy. According to statements operations director Dianne



Vendor Trot McCollough sells issues of *StreetWise*.

circulation of nearly 25,000 is the result of sales by its 270 vendors throughout Chicago. Vendors—identifiable by their official badges—buy the paper for 35 cents and then sell it on street corners for \$1, earning an average of \$400 a month. The income helps them buy meals and get off the streets.

The paper has addressed poverty issues by casting a critical eye on, among other things, corporate greed, such as articles criticizing Nike for its use of sweatshop labor. The organization also runs a Work Empowerment Center designed to teach homeless

WALTER KALLE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE/KRT2

Kenner made at a recent management meeting, Lydersen and commentary editor John Wilson (another *In These Times* contributor) will be "phased out" for being potential liabilities. Kenner has accused Lydersen and Wilson of "corporate bashing," even though stories she considered potentially libelous were well-documented.

The latest conflict between Oliver and the staff began on January 8, when former Editor-in-Chief Jalyne Strong filed a grievance with the board of directors against Oliver. Four days later, Oliver fired her. Then on February 5, nearly the entire staff sent a letter to the board accusing Oliver of exploitive labor practices, poor management and misappropriation of funds, and asking the Board to investigate. Among the grievances listed are inadequate heating and lighting for cashiers, an inequitable distribution of pay and benefits for entry-level employees, and questionable use of grant money intended for the organization's Work Empowerment Center.

In the following days, Crouse and production chief Allan Gomez were ordered to leave, Lydersen was fired and Wilson told not to come in. Oliver

## Florida paper back on the streets

Vendors of the Hallandale Beach, Florida *Homeless Voice* are back to work after a legal battle with the city over an ordinance banning the paper's street vendors from selling at city intersections. Meanwhile, the ordinance allowed vendors for the *Miami Herald* and the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* to continue with business as usual.

The *Homeless Voice* is published semi-monthly by the Helping People in America. Proceeds from sales help fund their homeless shelter.

Sean Cononie, founder of the *Homeless Voice*, sued the city on

February 9, saying that the law prohibiting charitable organizations from soliciting for more than five consecutive days does not apply to him because his newspaper is a legitimate publication. The lawsuit was settled on March 1, with the publication winning \$15,000 in back sales from the city.

Cononie plans to challenge bans in nearby Dade and Broward counties. "This doesn't just go for my vendors," Cononie says. "We have to set a precedent so they can't hurt people and papers in other cities. It's a war on the poor."

**Geeta Kharkar**

flew in former editor John Ellis from California to put out the paper. But when Ellis realized he could not do so without a staff, Kenner called the "fired" employees and told them to report to work the next morning. They agreed, even though their concerns had yet to be addressed.

According to Wilson, Ellis told the staff that Oliver would have no contact with them and Crouse would have control of the editorial content. But later that night, Oliver replaced a staff-writ-

ten editorial addressing the conflict with one of his own on an unrelated topic. In a letter to the board, Wilson said that restrictions on editorial autonomy were now worse than ever.

About 100 people gathered outside the *StreetWise* building on February 13—while a board meeting was taking place inside—to rally in support of the staff. A week later, the board issued a letter of response, citing a lack of communication as the main issue, defending the current management-heavy structure of the organization, and pledging they were working hard to fix the situation.

But Lydersen says the board's response is little more than a "band-aid solution" to fundamental problems: "The broken bathrooms and bad morale are merely symptoms of extensive labor, ethical and financial problems at the paper."

In the wake of the recent turmoil, the board of directors has appointed Kenner as editor-in-chief, despite her lack of experience in journalism. Kenner and Oliver now have final say over the paper's content. Board president Pam McElvaine told Crouse that *StreetWise* is not a regular newspaper, but a nonprofit organization, so it operates under a different set of rules.

Crouse sees the recent events as all part of the re-emphasis of the organization, and a sad shift away from its mission. "The priority is not the vendor, but the funder. It's no longer about maintaining the self-sufficiency of the individual vendor, but rather appealing to the philanthropic needs of the advertisers." ■

## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

IT'S BEEN CLEAR FOR SOME TIME THAT GEORGE W. BUSH IS NOT THE SWIFTEST ARMADILLO ON THE HIGHWAY...BUT SINCE HIS INAUGURATION, MANY IN THE MEDIA SEEM DETERMINED TO GRIT THEIR TEETH AND PRETEND OTHERWISE...

AS IF WE NEEDED FURTHER PROOF OF HIS UNQUESTIONED COMPETENCY, PRESIDENT BUSH MET TODAY WITH VICENTE FOX--AND DID NOT MISPRONOUNCE HIS NAME!



CONSIDER THE RECENT N.Y. TIMES EDITORIAL WHICH--AS IF PRAISING A "SPECIAL" CHILD--NOTED THAT BUSH "IS SMARTER THAN SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE GIVES HIM CREDIT FOR"...AND COMMENDED HIM FOR DEMONSTRATING "THAT HE TAKES THE PRESIDENCY SERIOUSLY."

YOU MEAN THE MOST POWERFUL MAN ON THE PLANET DOES NOT LITERALLY HAVE THE MENTAL CAPACITY OF A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD?

AND HE DOESN'T VIEW THE JOB AS SOME SORT OF LARK? HOW FOOLISH WE WERE TO EVER DOUBT HIM!



IT'S THE SAME THING THAT HAPPENS WHENEVER THE STOCK MARKET TAKES A SUDDEN DIVE: THE CALM VOICES OF AUTHORITY AND REASON ATTEMPT TO REASSURE A JITTERY PUBLIC BY "TALKING THE MARKET UP"...

IF WE ALL AGREE TO BELIEVE THAT OUR INVESTMENTS ARE WORTH LOTS AND LOTS OF MONEY--THEN THEY WILL BE! BUT IF ANYONE HAS ANY DOUBTS--THEN THE MAGIC SPELL WILL BE BROKEN AND ALL WILL BE LOST!



IN THIS CASE, THEY SEEM TO FEEL IT IS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO TALK GEORGE W. UP...AFTER ALL, AMERICANS MUST HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THEIR PRESIDENT--EVEN IF HIS FAVORITE BOOK IS "THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR"...

SO YOU SEE, TODAY'S NUCLEAR ATTACK ON FRANCE WAS NOT AN ACCIDENT AT ALL--BUT RATHER, PART OF THE PRESIDENT'S CAREFULLY-CRAFTED, LONG-RANGE FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY!





# Media Bomb on Baghdad Story

**O**n June 27, 1993, Bill Clinton ordered a bombardment of Baghdad. The next day he walked into church and said, "I feel quite good about what has transpired, and I think the American people should feel good about it."

In fact, many Americans didn't feel so good, and their fury grew as U.S. newspapers revealed the names and, in some cases, the faces of the Iraqis whom U.S. bombs had wounded and killed. The *Los Angeles Times*, for example, described Clinton's raid on Baghdad's Harthiya district, "a modest, palm-lined neighborhood that is home to shopkeepers, civil servants and private traders," and told readers about Leila Attar, Iraq's best-known female artist, who was killed by a stray U.S. missile that hit her home, killing her, her husband and their maid in their sleep.

Eight years and several thousand airstrikes later, George W. Bush approved more bombing near Baghdad. This time the press gave us not one name or face, save that of Dubya, with his garbled explanation for the attack: "Saddam Hussein has got to understand that we expect him to conform to the agreement that he signed after Desert Storm. We will enforce the no-fly zone both south and north. Our intention is to make sure the world is as peaceful as possible, and we're going to watch very carefully as to whether or not he develops weapons of mass destruction."

The *New York Times* ran four articles the day after the bombing, not one voicing a word of complaint. The lead editorial called the airstrikes "justified" and "timely;" the facing op-ed by Anthony Cordesman, a hawk with the Center for Strategic and International Studies, was headlined "No Choice But to Strike." As for fatalities, instead of doing their own reporting, the *Times* simply repeated the words of unnamed officials: "Iraqi television said numerous civilians had been wounded in the attacks. ... Pentagon officials said they had no evidence of civilian casualties." Iraqi TV reported three deaths and more than a dozen wounded.

Indeed, the U.S. media have as yet to assign one reporter to visit Iraqi hospitals to check out the government reports. Had the *New York Times* and others permitted critics to be heard, they would have made the point that Bush is lying or at best misleading the public. The so-called "no-fly



zones" are not part of any cease-fire treaty, nor are they part of any U.N. resolution. Ever since the first Bush administration imposed the zones in 1991, U.S. presidents have claimed that their purpose is to protect Iraqi and Kurdish civilians from abuse at Saddam Hussein's hands. But the United States has done nothing to protect the Kurds from attack by U.S. ally Turkey (whose forces invade northern Iraq every spring in pursuit of Kurdish separatists). No, the only purpose of these flights is to keep Iraqi planes out of two-thirds of Iraq's airspace. And such a critic would have made the obvious point: Who is provoking whom? The zones are illegal under international law, it's just that no one has the power to stop them.

Since 1996, Saddam has ordered Iraqi gunmen to fire back, in part because of attacks from critics (including his son) who think (after 10 years of sanctions and bombing) that Saddam has gone soft on the West. Are Iraqi defenses getting better, as the Defense Department asserts? Perhaps. But no U.S. plane has ever been hit; meanwhile, the Iraqis claim some 323 people have been killed and 957 wounded by Allied air strikes. As for mass destruction, the U.S. and British actions have only encouraged it. U.N. weapons inspectors had to be pulled out of Iraq before Clinton's December 1998 assault, and not one has ever been back.

The *Times* also denied its readers the facts about how U.S. policy toward Iraq is harming U.S. relations overseas. NATO allies France, Italy and Germany condemned the airstrikes, as did U.N. Security Council members China and Russia. Most of the countries the U.S. claims to protect with its policy toward Iraq were against the attack, including Turkey, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Egypt, declared the airstrikes "unacceptable."

The policy of isolating Iraq is bankrupt. A variety of European countries have violated the no-fly edict and want an end to the sanctions. In January, Syria and Egypt signed a free trade pact with Iraq and committed to closer travel and trading links. Baghdad is already Cairo's top export market after the United States, and Iraqi oil is "leaking" through Iran despite sanctions.

Do the U.S. media tell U.S. taxpayers, who pay for the program, that it's kaput? Absolutely not. Instead the *Times*, reporting on Secretary of State Colin Powell's

**The vast majority of nations have had enough of the U.S. policy of starve and strafe.**

visit abroad, declared that he had "won agreement from Arab nations on a plan to modify sanctions." Actually, Powell had succumbed just a tiny bit to massive pressure from the vast majority of nations who have had enough of the U.S. program of starve and strafe.

When the *Washington Post* revealed on February 22 that most of the bombs dropped by U.S. warplanes missed their mark, no one seems to have posed the question—where *did* the bombs hit—or *whom*? The U.S. public, it turns out, have neither the means to ask, nor the right to know. Luckily, media censorship is not stopping U.S. organizing. On February 18, representatives of more than 60 peace and justice groups formed a new coalition to challenge U.S. policy, the National Network to End the War Against Iraq ([www.ccnep.org/Conference/conference.html](http://www.ccnep.org/Conference/conference.html)). ■



# 10 MYTHS ABOUT THE DEFENSE BUDGET

BY LAWRENCE J. KORB



PHOTOS: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

**A**fter the Cold War ended, many U.S. military leaders were worried that the defense budget would be slashed dramatically. Gen. Colin Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, expressed the concerns of many when he said he feared there would be a stampede in Congress to shift money from the military budget to such things as schools, housing and crime prevention.

Still, there were those who recognized the need to shift funds from defense to social needs. The late Sen. John Tower, for instance, said during the 1989 hearings on his unsuccessful bid to become secretary of defense in the first Bush administration that if the Soviet Empire collapsed, the U.S. obviously would reduce its allocation of resources to defense. Tower was a defense hawk who, as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, was largely responsible for the Reagan buildup, but he asserted that the United States could be spending enormously less on defense in the absence of a Soviet threat. "If there were no Soviet threat," he said, "we'd be maintaining the kind of Army we had in 1938, [which was] about half the size of what the Marine Corps is now" (or about 197,000 troops).

But the Army of today is not half the size of the Marine Corps of a decade ago. The active duty Army still has nearly 500,000 soldiers. Even the Marine Corps is not half the size it was a decade ago. Today's Corps has 172,000 marines, down only about 12 percent since 1989. Nor are we spending enormously less on defense than we spent during the Cold War. In fact, the budget for fiscal year 2002 that President George W. Bush just outlined to Congress calls for spending \$324.8 billion, which is \$14.2 billion more than

the spending slated for this year (and the likelihood of additional spending is high).

Even if one adjusts for inflation, we are again hovering in the range of our defense spending during the Cold War. Our military spending is nearly three times that of all our potential adversaries combined. Yet we have not shifted enormous sums of money from defense to such areas as education and housing. In fact, for fiscal year 2001, Congress passed a budget resolution that gives the Pentagon 51.3 percent of the total discretionary budget.

One would think the current situation has materialized because the threats we face are growing or our adversaries are spending more. In fact, the U.S. share of the world's military spending today stands at about 35 percent, substantially higher than during the Cold War. In 1985, at the height of the Reagan build-up, the United States and the Soviet Union spent equal amounts on defense; now Russia spends only one-sixth of what the United States spends. If one adds in the spending of U.S. allies, the picture becomes even more favorable to the United States. Our NATO allies spend three times more on defense than Russia. Israel spends as much as Iraq and Iran combined. South Korea spends nine times more on defense than North Korea. And Japan spends more on defense than China.

**T**he main reason political leaders from both parties and continue to approve ever larger expenditures on defense than necessary is that they have accepted a series of misleading assumptions, or half-truths, about the current state of America's military. Before developing a more realistic budget, it is important to confront these myths squarely.



**MYTH #1: Defense spending should be increased because it consumes the smallest portion of the GDP and the smallest percentage of the overall budget since the beginning of World War II.**

This argument has been advanced by President Bush, Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona) and former Army Chief of Staff Dennis Reimer. While this statement is true as far as it goes, it tells us more about the tremendous growth of our economy, the rising cost of health care, and the aging of the population than it does about national security. Moreover, it implies that the U.S. military is now in as bad shape as it was in 1940. What has been forgotten is that, at the beginning of World War II, the U.S. military was one-tenth the size of Germany's, half the size of Japan's, and ranked 16th in the world.

**MYTH #2: The defense budget has been reduced over the past decade to help lower the budget deficit. Now that the federal budget has a hefty surplus, defense spending should be increased.**

The defense budget has been reduced from the lofty levels of the Reagan years primarily because the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union collapsed. Moreover, the total combined defense expenditures in 1999 of the "countries of concern" (formerly "rogue states")—Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Cuba and Syria—was \$13.8 billion, or about 4 percent of the U.S. defense budget. The United States and its allies account for 65 percent of the world's total military expenditures.



**Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has ordered a bottom-up review.**

**MYTH #3: Defense spending should increase because there is a gap between defense programs and defense resources.**

The Joint Chiefs claim there is a \$150 billion gap between current defense funding and what is needed. The fact is the Joint Chiefs will never be satisfied. Had we listened to them during the Cold War, this nation would have spent several trillion dollars more, throwing money at all sorts of nonexistent gaps in our defense.

**MYTH #4: The military needs more funding to implement its two-war strategy.**

Such a position—the need to be able to conduct two major conflicts simultaneously—defies both logic and history. When the United States was bogged down in Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf wars, no other nation threatened U.S. vital interests elsewhere in the world. At least two bipartisan groups established by Congress since the end of the Cold War have rejected the two-war strategy, simply calling it a justification for larger forces. Yet it remains a guiding policy of the U.S. military.

**MYTH #5: Deploying troops in peacekeeping operations like Bosnia has diverted large sums of money from core defense functions.**

In fact, peacekeeping operations consumed less than 2 percent of the defense budget during the Clinton administration. Only 10,000 U.S. troops, out of a total force of 2.3 million, are currently involved in these small-scale contingencies. Furthermore, the threat from regional "rogues" has been wildly overestimated and is rapidly declining.

**MYTH #6: The Pentagon needs more money because it is facing an investment shortfall.**

The secretary of defense and the Joint Chiefs claim the Pentagon has needed \$60 billion a year in new equipment to keep its forces modernized. But during the past five years, the Pentagon on average has spent less than \$50 billion on new equipment. Moreover, the \$60 billion dedicated to new equipment in the fiscal year 2001 budget has put the U.S. military in an arms race with itself.

For example, the amount of money earmarked for new equipment assumes that the Defense Department must

replace its current generation of tactical aircraft, the F-16, F-15, F-14 and F/A-18 C/D, with the newer, more sophisticated and much more expensive, F-22 and F/A-18 E/F, even though the current aircraft are already the best in the world. Similarly, the Pentagon claims it needs a new generation of submarines, even though the current generation has many years of useful life left—and no next generation of Soviet submarines to

threaten it. Finally, the current \$60 billion benchmark ignores the fact that the U.S. procurement budget is 40 percent more than all of our allies combined, 75 percent more than either Russia or China, and nine times greater than that of Iraq and North Korea put together.

**MYTH #7: The readiness of our armed forces is declining because we are not spending enough on "operations and maintenance," which is the money it takes to keep weapon systems functioning.**

In fiscal year 2000, real operations and maintenance spending per capita was 10 percent higher than at the height of the Reagan build-up, exceeding \$100 billion for an active duty force of 1.36 million. Moreover, the armed services are still using the same readiness criteria as they did during the Cold War to justify additional expenditures. Even if the mission-capable rates of tactical aircraft have declined by 5 percent or even 10 percent compared to 1985, as some have claimed, that's not a real problem unless the North Korean or Iraqi military is 90 to 95 percent as capable as the Soviets were.

**MYTH #8: The services are failing to meet their recruiting goals, even though they have lowered the quality standards they maintained in the '80s.**

On the contrary, the armed services now have a higher percentage of "high quality accessions" (high school graduates and people scoring average or above average on the armed forces qualifications test) than at any time during the Reagan years.

**MYTH #9: Personnel are leaving the services because a much higher percentage of the force is deployed overseas than during the Cold War.**

Some have claimed that the military has been deployed overseas once every nine weeks in the past decade. The fact of the matter is that in the '80s more than 500,000 (or 25 percent) people of an active duty force of 2.1 million were deployed outside the United States. Today that number is about 230,000 or 15 percent of an active force of 1.36 million.

**MYTH # 10: There is a pay gap between the military and civilian sectors; therefore, pay and benefits for all military personnel must be increased substantially.**

As evidence of the gap, proponents of a pay raise claim that the military suffers a 13 percent pay gap relative to the private sector. They also argue that this has created a situation in which 12,000 military people are on food stamps.

But as Cindy Williams, former head of the Congressional Budget Office's National Security Division, has demonstrated, there really is no pay gap. The majority of the men and women in the armed services earn more than 75 percent of their civilian counterparts. An entering recruit with a high school diploma makes \$22,000, while an officer earns \$34,000. After 20 years, the salary of an enlisted man exceeds \$50,000, while that of officers tops \$100,000. In addition, throughout their careers, military personnel are eligible for a wide variety of bonuses and receive a generous package of fringe benefits (free health care, generous noncontributory retirement, etc.).

While it is true that some 12,000 military personnel are technically eligible for food stamps, the *Wall Street Journal* has pointed out that the vast majority of them are individuals with large families in the lower ranks who live on-base. Because they live on-base in rent-free quarters, they do not receive their housing allowance. If they lived off-base, or if their compensation were adjusted to reflect the fair market value of their housing, most of these people would not be eligible for food stamps. Correcting these distortions reduces the number to less than 1,000 soldiers.

None of this analysis is meant to indicate that the military does not face challenges. But these challenges or problems can be met without throwing more and more money at the Pentagon. The majority of the problems faced by the Pentagon are self-inflicted. In the '90s, the Defense Department conducted three reviews of its strategy and force structure. Despite the fact that these reviews were conducted by three different secretaries of defense, they did not result in any fundamental changes. Structurally, the force of 2000 is little different from what it was a decade ago. Although the force is somewhat smaller, it is in essence a "Cold War-Lite" force. The troops drive the same tanks, fly the same planes, and sail the same ships as they did in 1990. Moreover, they use the same procurement strategy and employ the same organizational and operational models.

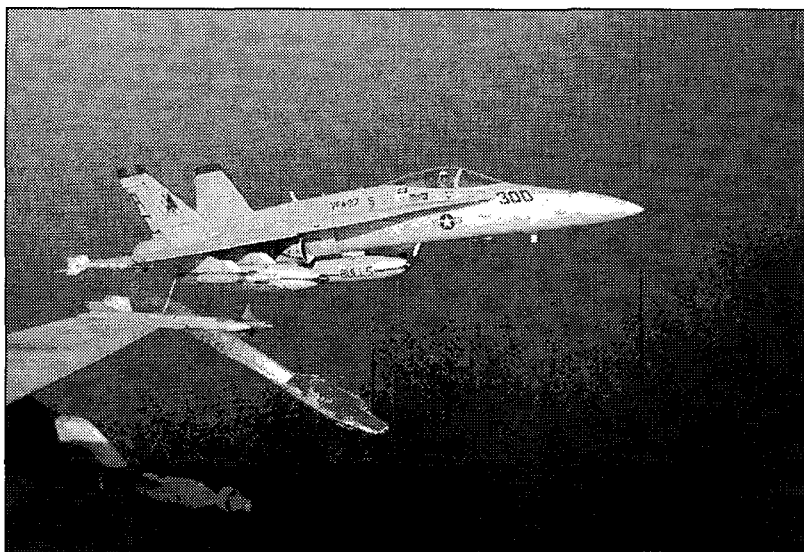
While such a development is understandable from a bureaucratic and political view, it has given America the worst of all possible worlds. Not only do we spend more

than is necessary on defense, we get far less than we should for our money. A true bottom-up review that resulted in a realistic budget would give us a more effective defense at a greatly reduced cost.

What would this budget look like? The United States could have a realistic defense budget for around \$260 billion, which is about 20 percent less than the \$324.8 billion budget proposed for fiscal year 2002 by President Bush.

The reasons for the current excess in U.S. defense spending are clear. Our leaders have accepted a number of half-truths about defense spending, the current shape of our armed forces and the threats to our national security. They have not shown the political courage to stand up to the Pentagon and its supporters who wittingly or unwittingly mouth these misleading statements. If these trends continue, the United States is likely to spend at least \$500 billion more on defense in the coming decade than is necessary to provide for our national security. Although we are a wealthy nation, and currently have a budget surplus, this is still a large amount of money that could be put to much better use elsewhere. ■

**Lawrence J. Korb** is vice president and director of studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. From 1981 to 1985, he served in the Reagan administration as assistant secretary of defense for manpower, reserve affairs and logistics. This article is excerpted and updated from "A Realistic Defense Budget for the New Millennium," a report produced by Korb in conjunction with Business Leaders for Sensible Priorities ([www.businessleaders.org](http://www.businessleaders.org)).



**The Pentagon wants to replace aircraft that already are the best in the world.**



# THE NEW MARSHALL PLAN

## THE PENTAGON'S OLDEST COLD WARRIOR HAS A DUBIOUS VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF NATIONAL DEFENSE.

BY JASON VEST

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld will soon receive a far-reaching report likely to serve as the working blueprint for the Pentagon's future. Given that the author of that report is a futurist fascinated with the most advanced technologies, the document is expected to be chock full of recommendations emphasizing an expansive embrace of "information age" weaponry and a shift away from more conventional procurements.

Indeed, reading the February 9 *Washington Post*, one might be inclined to think that Andrew Marshall, head of the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment (ONA), is an exceptional island of ingenuity and integrity floating amidst the vast archipelago of corrupt and conniving Defense Department bureaucrats. According to *Post* reporter Thomas Ricks, Marshall is "one of the Pentagon's most unconventional thinkers," a man who is "controversial" due to his prescient, visionary views that are "hardly conservative." Because Marshall has scrapped with the military brass over a handful of doctrinal and procurement issues, he's a "radical reformer." Not that the average person would know any of this, of course, as Marshall is "all but unknown outside national security circles" and is legendary for being "publicity-shy."

For a guy who has been ensconced at the Pentagon since 1973—and began work as an analyst for the RAND Corporation back in 1949—the 79-year-old Marshall has done a remarkable job of flying below the radar. But defense contracting executives and their advocates on the Hill, like Frank Gaffney's Center for Security Policy, adore Marshall for his dire prognostications about an inevitably bellicose and hegemonic China and his advocacy of "Revolution in Military Affairs," a doctrine critics charge is an intellectual cover for spending largess on "precision," Buck Rogers-type weaponry.

But it's his subtle role as a National Missile Defense booster that has many concerned about his leading the Pentagon's latest top-to-bottom review. "Putting Andy Marshall in charge of this is a ploy to make sure National Missile Defense gets funded," says Mel Goodman, a veteran CIA analyst now at the National Defense University. "If he can justify making cuts in conventional procurement, they can then justify taking \$60 billion to throw at NMD. This is the first secretary of defense to

turn over a key problem to his net assessment adviser, which is a strange way to do business. If they were serious about this, they would not be looking for answers in several weeks."

According to those who have worked with Marshall, or kept an eye on him, his vision of defense revolves around the notion that in the future wars will not be fought up close with aircraft carrier sorties and armor and infantry deployments, but from a distance with long-range arsenal ships and planes, networked sensor arrays and precision weapons. As such, Marshall has been particularly critical of the Air Force's F-22 fighter program—the plane, he says, has too short a range to be useful to the American military of the future.

Marshall's opposition to the F-22 is often touted as an example of his "iconoclastic" thinking. But according to investigative journalist Ken Silverstein—who profiled Marshall in his book *Private Warriors*—opposition to the F-22 doesn't make Marshall a maverick visionary. "So he has been a critic of the F-22, fine and dandy," Silverstein says. "But you can find case after case where he has come out in support of other systems that are just as worthy of skewering. Saying he's a tough critic is like saying Jack Valenti is a tough critic of the movie industry."

Silverstein is perhaps the only author who has written critically of Marshall. While Marshall gave rare interviews to Ricks for a fawning 1994 *Wall Street Journal* piece and to right-wing historian Jay Winik for an admiring April 1999 article in *Washingtonian* magazine, Marshall declined to answer any of Silverstein's queries. Noting that only a handful of sycophantic articles were responsible for Marshall's public image, Silverstein expressed great skepticism in his book about some of Marshall's claims, including one that the ONA had been the first to sound the national security alarm about AIDS in the '80s, going so far as to alert the Centers for Disease Control to take the problem seriously. (CDC did not respond to queries from *In These Times* about any contact between ONA and CDC, but according to interviews with Pentagon sources who remember early '80s briefings on AIDS, no one can recall any involvement—or advocacy role—from Marshall's office.)



Andrew W. Marshall, a.k.a. "Yoda."

PHOTOS: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Another claim Silverstein found a bit difficult to swallow was a riff from Ricks' *Journal* piece, in which he asserted: "Well ahead of most Sovietologists, Mr. Marshall noticed the weakness of Soviet society." In fact, Silverstein wrote, Marshall's "associates have no recollection of Marshall ever having expressed such views." He quoted a former staffer as saying, "Until the very end he was a major promoter of the line that 'The Russians are coming and they're ten feet tall.'"

Indeed, Marshall had long hyped the Soviet threat. In 1977, he was one of the quietly forceful hands behind the infamous "Team B" episode, in which members of the far-right Committee on the Present Danger were given access to CIA data and allowed to histrionically rewrite the *National Intelligence Estimate on Soviet Military Intentions*. Though Winik wrote in *Washingtonian* that Marshall later rebuked the intelligence community for overestimating Soviet strengths in the '80s, Lawrence Korb, a former Pentagon official now at the Council on Foreign Relations, recalls that Marshall actually considered the Soviets a greater danger than ever before as the '80s and early '90s unfolded (see "Ten Myths About the Defense Budget," page 10). "Andy's idea was that as they were collapsing, they'd lash out and were more dangerous," Korb says. "That was one that was wide off the mark."

In the early '80s, it was Marshall's view that to ensure the Soviet Union's speediest demise, it was imperative to arm the Afghan *mujahadeen* with Stinger missiles, a move opposed by even the CIA—which rightfully feared that the weapon would inevitably end up on the black market and in Soviet hands. But two close Marshall associates at the Pentagon, Fred Ikle and Michael Pillsbury, pushed hard to see that Marshall's argument won the day. Later they would argue that this proposal won the war in Afghanistan. But as former *Times* of London defense correspondent James Adams wrote in his 1990 book *Engines of War*: "In the self-congratulation that followed the Soviet withdrawal, three key legacies of the war were generally overlooked: the impact on Soviet society and its armed forces, the arms market created by the war and the heroin and marijuana market that has grown in Pakistan and Afghanistan as a result of the war."

According to several former intelligence analysts, Marshall's supposedly long-range, forward-thinking shop was

simply oblivious to this reality, blinded by what Adams characterized as the "holy crusade" against the Soviets that the Afghanistan cause had become. Even though the Stinger shipments did result in more destroyed Russian helicopters, they were not decisive in forcing the Soviet withdrawal. In fact, they may have made the war more brutal. "The Soviet policy of scorched earth and the depopulation of rural areas destroyed much of the country's traditional economic infrastructure," Adams wrote. "The people who remained in the country were forced to turn to agriculture that did not depend on complex irrigation systems." As a result, poppy cultivation and the export of heroin shot through the roof.

To a number of former intelligence analysts, Marshall's role in getting Stinger missiles sent to the Afghan *mujahadeen* highlights a certain myopia of the ONA-style of thinking. "I don't recall where he was out in front of the whole Soviet issue—if anything, he may have said it was time to throw more money into taking out the Soviets at a time when we were spending too much already," says Goodman, formerly one of the CIA's top Sovietologists.

## ANDREW MARSHALL IS "ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE PORK-SEEKING MISSILES EVER DEPLOYED BY THE MILITARY BRASS."

This type of thinking is what has critics most worried about NMD. Though Silverstein holds that Marshall "has been an enthusiastic supporter of Star Wars schemes," current and former colleagues contend that Marshall—who, despite being enamored of futuristic weapons concepts, writes in longhand, does not use a computer and doesn't have call waiting, according to

Winik—is much more subtle and circumspect in his support of NMD. Few of his associates, from the past or present, in fact, are willing to ascribe any particular view to him, and not just because of his legendary taciturn bent. ("He's as Delphic as they come—days may go by before he utters a word," says a former ONA staffer, adding that this proclivity for reticence has earned him the nickname "Yoda.")

"He is not very interested in the here and now, but is primarily interested in hypothesizing futures that cut against the grain, and you can argue that we really do need someone like that," says Jonathan Pollack, a professor at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, and one of the leading analysts of the Chinese military. "His interest is to take events as they are understood and find a way to turn them on their head, to conflate understanding, and look for patterns or possibilities that could be studied. And he often comes up with quirky results."

But according to a longtime analyst, the product from Marshall's office often seems to be "thinking outside of the box for the sake of thinking outside the box," fused with a touch of the paranoid. "His views are very much animated by the belief that most of those at the Pentagon are asleep at the switch, too wedded to the status quo and weapons systems he believes will be vulnerable in the future," says the analyst.

Whether serious policy judgments and spending decisions should be based on this approach is another question. "The reality is a lot of the things he's postulating aren't provable," the analyst adds. "His escape clause is that what he's talking about is not reality today, but is using the equation of 'based



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on this variable, let's extrapolate and postulate that  $x$  could happen, which could lead to  $y$ , which could lead to  $z$ —and how do we prepare for that?"

Or, to put it more succinctly, Pollack affectionately calls Marshall "a worrywart." To Silverstein, a better description of Marshall is "one of the most effective pork-seeking missiles ever deployed by the military brass." But unlike the actual brass, which loves to spend money on planes, tanks and ships (some of which are archaic and ripe for cutting) Marshall swoons over high-technology networked sensor systems and "smart" weapons—expensive procurements that are notorious for, well, not working.

Still, the expectation of many Washington observers is that Marshall's recommendations will give the latest incarnation of

Star Wars a boost. As a key witness before Rumsfeld's Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States, Marshall played no small role in convincing the commission—whose findings have been cogently criticized by numerous analysts—that a real threat is imminent. "Though Rumsfeld's commission made no recommendation whatsoever on national missile defense, it dealt with the issue very artfully," Pollack says. "In fact, if that commission had a methodology, it was a very Marshallian methodology—you can posit these circumstances, and if you posit the following it's feasible this next thing could happen."

And that means a lot of money-making opportunities for defense contractors. As Pollack says, "This is going to be a gravy train." ■

# IN FROM THE COLD WAR

## BUSH'S PICK FOR U.N. AMBASSADOR HAS SOME SPOOKY STUFF ON HIS RESUME

BY TERRY J. ALLEN

Like spooks from an abandoned B-Movie graveyard, officials of the Reagan-Bush era are emerging from the dirt and showing up inside the George W. Bush administration. The latest resurrection is John Negroponte, whom Bush recently nominated as ambassador to the United Nations.

As U.S. ambassador to Honduras from 1981 to 1985, Negroponte abetted and covered up human rights crimes. He was a zealous anti-Communist crusader in America's covert wars against the leftist Sandinista government in Nicaragua and the FMLN rebels in El Salvador. The high-level planning, money and arms for those wars flowed from Washington, but much of the on-the-ground logistics for the deployment of intelligence, arms and soldiers was run out of Honduras. U.S. military aid to Honduras jumped from \$3.9 million in 1980 to \$77.4 million by 1984. So crammed was the tiny country with U.S. bases and weapons that it was dubbed the *USS Honduras*, as if it was simply an off-shore staging ground.

The captain of this ship, Negroponte was in charge of the U.S. Embassy when, according to a 1995 four-part series in the *Baltimore Sun*, hundreds of Hondurans were kidnapped, tortured and killed by Battalion 316, a secret army intelligence unit trained and supported by the Central Intelligence Agency. As Gary Cohn and Ginger Thompson wrote in the series, Battalion 316 used "shock and suffocation devices in interrogations. Prisoners often were kept naked and, when no longer useful, killed and buried in unmarked graves." Members of Battalion 316 were trained in surveillance and interrogation at a secret location in the United States and by

the CIA at bases in Honduras. Gen. Gustavo Alvarez Martinez, the chief of the Honduran armed forces who personally directed Battalion 316, also trained in the United States at the School of the Americas.

Negroponte tried to distance himself from the pattern of abuses, even after a flood of declassified documents exposed the extent of U.S. involvement with Battalion 316. In a segment of the 1998 CNN mini-series *Cold War*, Negroponte said that "some of the retrospective effort to try and suggest that we were supportive of, or condoned the actions of, human rights violators is really revisionistic."

**"HE WOULD HAVE HAD TO BE DELIBERATELY BLIND NOT TO KNOW ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS."**

By the time Negroponte was appointed ambassador by President Reagan in 1981, human rights activists in Honduras were vocally denouncing abuses. Former Honduran congressman Efraín Díaz Arrivillaga pleaded with Negroponte and other U.S. officials to stop the abuses committed by the U.S.-controlled military. "Their attitude was one of tolerance and silence," Díaz told

the *Sun*. "They needed Honduras to loan its territory more than they were concerned about innocent people being killed."

Negroponte ignored such protests, and annually filed State Department reports from Honduras that gave the impression that the Honduran military respected human rights. But in an interview with *In These Times*, Negroponte's predecessor as ambassador, Carter appointee Jack Binns, tells a different story: "Negroponte would have had to be deliberately blind not to know about human rights violations. ... One of the things a departing ambassador does is prepare a briefing book, and one of those issues we includ-

ed [in our briefing book] was how to deal with the escalation of human rights issues."

Binns considered the U.S. support for Alvarez and Battalion 316 "counterproductive" to the declared objective of "establishing a rule of law." This lack of enthusiasm, Binns says, led to "my being cut out of the loop" by the Reagan administration, which he served for several months before Negroponte took over. In the summer of 1981, Binns recalls, "I was called unexpectedly to Washington by Tom Enders, the assistant secretary of state. He asked me to stop reporting human rights violations through official State Department channels and to use back channels because they were afraid of leaks."

As Binns explains, back-channel messages "don't officially exist. The message is translated over CIA channels, decrypted and hand-carried from Langley, one copy only. No record."

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Binns did not agree to use back channels and when he returned to Honduras, he received no further reports of human rights violations from the CIA. "I was deliberately lied to," says Binns, who later found out that Reagan administration had been working behind his back.

**H**onduras was only one of many hot spots where Negroponte served. He spent four years as a political officer in the U.S. Embassy in Saigon during the height of the Vietnam War. As an aide to then National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger at the Paris Peace Talks, he fell out of favor with his boss, wrote Mark Matthews in a 1997 article in the *Sun*, "by arguing that the chief U.S. negotiator was making too many concessions to the North Vietnamese." Negroponte also served in the Philippines, Panama and Mexico, where he was a strong booster for NAFTA.

Rumored to have been Colin Powell's pick for the job of U.N. ambassador, Negroponte has a reputation as a loyal bureaucrat and efficient fixer. He also has a Cold War mentality characteristic of many of the old Reagan-Bush people surrounding the new president.

The lessons Negroponte has learned from the past may shed light on what kind of U.N. ambassador he will be if his nomination is approved by the Senate. When he appeared in 1981 before a Senate committee for confirmation as envoy to Honduras, he said, "I believe we must do our best not to allow the tragic outcome of Indochina to be repeated in Central America."

The tragedy to which he referred, of course, was the defeat of the United States, not the devastation and death caused by U.S. intervention. ■

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# Indian Givers

## A slew of "charities" have made big business out of Native American poverty

By Koren Capozza

**T**hey target well-meaning Americans with direct mail and telephone calls describing conditions of poverty, hunger and despair in Indian country. Inevitably, the pitch ends with a plea for potential donors to open their hearts and wallets to a charity or relief organization that claims to address these dire conditions. But donors should be wary of a growing number of charities that purport to alleviate poverty in American Indian communities but instead use donated funds to stuff their own coffers.

"There are many, many non-Indian operations that use Indians as a way of garnering revenue," says Jerry Reynolds of the First Nations Development Institute, a Fredericksburg, Virginia-based nonprofit. The number of Indian-themed charities has been increasing steadily over the past 10 years, and the money has been flowing to non-Indian organizations in record amounts.

Charitable organizations are latching on to Native American causes because they are an easy sell. Americans feel guilty about their nation's treatment of Native peoples, and they give money with the intention of correcting history's wrongdoings, says Daniel Borochoff, president of the American Institute of Philanthropy. "These charities exploit the tremendous reservoir of goodwill that exists worldwide for Indian people," agrees Vernon Bellecourt, an American Indian Movement leader.

The location of reservations in America's rural outposts keeps shoddy charity programs hidden from scrutiny. "There are so many needs out there that it leaves the door open for opportunistic ventures. There's a lack of oversight from the funding agencies to see if these groups are legitimately serving native communities," says Donna Chavis, executive director of Native Americans in Philanthropy, a North Carolina-based advocacy group.



RICK WILKING/REUTERS

**Shady fundraising operations falsely claim reservations have been hit with catastrophes like famine and mass suicide.**

American Indian communities are among the nation's poorest, so donated goods and services are usually welcomed regardless of how they are obtained. "People aren't knowledgeable about the full amount that's being raised. It's real difficult when you're dealing with any kind of poverty stricken area; any kind of assistance is looked at as very beneficial," explains Ken LeDeaux, a former business manager for the Rosebud Sioux tribe who says he keeps a close eye on charity activities in the area.

Shady operations also may proliferate because government oversight of charities is sorely lacking. The Supreme Court has forbidden states from setting limits on what percentage of a charity's contributions must be spent on programs, and the majority of charities have gross receipts of less than \$25,000—making them exempt from releasing their tax information to the public. For that reason, the inner-workings of two-thirds of American charities remain a mystery.

**O**ne rogue charity, the Rapid City, South Dakota-based American Indian Relief Council (AIRC), gained

notoriety in the early '90s when it was accused of dumping useless textbooks and outdated gardening seeds on the Sioux reservation as part of its relief program. One of the AIRC's largest services was its employment-training program, which consisted of hiring Native Americans to make fundraising calls. Employees blew the whistle on the organization's dubious fundraising pitches, which they said were manipulative exaggerations and lies. They complained that the money the AIRC raised for Native Americans wasn't making it to the reservations.

Eventually the Pennsylvania Attorney General's office sued the AIRC in 1993 for lying to donors about certain reservations, claiming they were hit by catastrophic natural disasters and needed funds to prevent famine and death. The lawsuit also charged that the AIRC overvalued the prices of goods it donated to tribes—like the expired seeds—listing them at market value. In 1999, AIRC President Brian Brown settled the lawsuit and agreed to pay the state \$350,000.

But instead of shutting down the AIRC, Brown—who had previously been sued by the attorneys general of Connecticut and Pennsylvania in 1991 for inflating commodity values and deceiving donors—discreetly downsized the group's South Dakota operations and shifted its focus to the American Southwest. The AIRC has been born anew under a different parent organization, National Relief Charities (NRC), which operates two new subsidiaries—the Council of Indian Nations and Southwest Indian Relief—in Apache Junction, Arizona. Brown keeps a low profile in his current office, tucked away in a nondescript industrial park outside of Portland, Oregon.

However, the charity's makeover is entirely superficial. The NRC is still distributing a pitiful portion of its revenues to the constituency it purports to serve. According to the NRC's 1999 federal tax filings, it earned more than \$8.3 million in donations last year, but only 30 percent was spent on programs. In contrast, Brown's salary has hovered at about \$120,000 for the past two years. The National Charities Information Bureau, an Arlington, Virginia-based watchdog group, suggests charities should spend a minimum of 60 percent of total expenditures on programs and services, with the available balance going to fundraising and administration.

The tactics employed by Brown are not unusual among a few other large charities like the Native American Heritage Association (NAHA). A sibling of the AIRC, the NAHA directs the funds it raises through telemarketing back into the organization by listing its fundraising machine as "employment training" for Native Americans and "public education" for the donors it targets.

The NAHA is run by Dave and Bernice Meyers, co-defendants in the lawsuit filed by the Pennsylvania Attorney General against AIRC in 1993. The Meyers created the AIRC in 1990, then gave it to the board of directors, who elected

Brown as president. Their tangled pasts could explain their similar approaches to fundraising. When Dave Meyers was president of the AIRC, he sent one direct mail solicitation that falsely claimed teen-agers on reservations were committing suicide *en masse*. In 1997, former NAHA employee Dennis Running Shield told *Indian Country Today* that the charity only donated used goods to the tribes and Meyers asked employees to do personal errands for him like paint his house. Joe Mustard, the organization's treasurer, claims NAHA spent 62 percent of its budget on programming. But a closer look at the organization's federal tax filings for last year shows that barely 43 percent was spent on programs and services. Even this figure is a liberal one—a considerable portion of this amount was spent on salaries, compensation and benefits for NAHA fundraisers and staff. Meanwhile, Meyers took home a salary of more than \$143,000 last year as president, and Mustard made \$70,000 as treasurer.

Although the NAHA and NRC policies are unethical, they're not illegal. According to current regulations, charities that distribute donated goods—surplus food, used clothes, textbooks—can count them as a program expense at up to market value. Moreover, tucking money back into charity operations by shifting fundraising costs into program expenditures is commonly practiced and does not violate any accounting guidelines.

Then there is Princess Pale Moon, the personality behind the American Indian Heritage Foundation (AIHF). She claims to have created the organization so young American Indians wouldn't feel ashamed—the way she once did—about their heritage. The only problem is, Pale Moon isn't Native American. She's not registered with any federally recognized tribe. "We don't have any royalty," Bellecourt says. "They've always got to be 'princesses' or something or other. It's a white woman masquerading as an Indian and, of course, she has some Indians on her board to give her a cover."

Pale Moon nonetheless has enjoyed a great deal of success as an Indian spokeswoman—she sang the national anthem at two Republican conventions and raises millions every year for Indian causes. Unfortunately, those causes are often aimed at her own self-promotion. Of the \$197,000 the AIHF spent on programs in 1998, \$24,566 was spent on TV and public appearances.

An incident with a tribe in Port Graham, Alaska was another example of shady AIHF practices. Although the AIHF collected funds for the supposedly starving "Alaskan Paiutes" (the tribe is actually Aleut), Pale Moon never forwarded any money to the tribe. "After she collected all that money on behalf of us, for using us, I just felt really violated," says village chief Elenore McMullen. "We never even got so much as a letter of apology."

The inner workings of some charities is a mystery because of federal laws that protect religious organizations from government meddling. One Gallup, New Mexico-based char-

**"If they're claiming that Indian people or Indian kids are starving or without blankets or without hope, they're probably not legitimate."**



ity, the Southwest Indian Foundation (SWIF), is not a church, but still isn't required to make its financial statements available because it was founded by a Catholic priest. "Seventy-five percent of religious charities do not register with the IRS—they're not required to," says Chuck McClean of Philanthropic Research Inc. "They only do it because they think it's easier to raise money."

The IRS exception effectively gives church-run charities *carte blanche* to collect and spend funds as they see fit. That unchecked freedom has resulted in some outrageous abuses, as the public saw when the Jim and Tammy Faye Baker scandal broke in 1987. Nonetheless, the lessons learned from those incidents have not translated into more oversight. "This is a First Amendment problem," McClean says. "The government is very careful with anything that looks like they might be restricting freedom of religion."

The SWIF raises funds through its mail-order catalog, which features the arts and crafts of Native artists. Thus the organization includes catalog sales and promotions as part of its jobs training program—a practice that watchdog groups say is suspect. In 1999, the charity made \$12.3 million and says it distributed \$7.4 million to charitable causes. But those figures should be taken with a grain of salt. "They're spending only 33 percent on bona fide charitable programs," says Borochoff, who was able to obtain the group's 1997 tax information. "They're making a claim that by selling this jewelry this is an employment program, and they make a claim that they're improving the economy of a poor area that Indians live in by increasing volume at the post office."

Another charity that enjoys similar anonymity is the Don Stewart Foundation, an evangelical group running several charities including the Southwest Indian Children's Fund (SWICF). This group claims to help children on reservations in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. A representative says the charity works primarily with the Gila River tribe near Phoenix, an unusual candidate for relief. The tribe is flush with casino money after it developed two gaming operations, a golf course and a five-star resort hotel. But stranger still is the fact that the Gila River tribal government office doesn't know of the SWICF. "I haven't heard of that group at all," says tribe spokesman Gary Bohnee.

SWICF representatives in the charity's Phoenix headquarters admit that only 15 percent of donations go to relief programs. So what happens to the other 85 percent? The IRS wondered the same thing and revoked the group's tax-exempt status in 1997, citing misuse of funds. Investigators listed a down payment on Stewart's house, costs associated with his wedding reception, and expenses to visit former girlfriends as ways Stewart bilked charity funds for personal use. In spite of the convincing

case against the group, Stewart appealed the IRS decision and is still accepting contributions.

Given the track record of these not-so-charitable organizations, it's easy to become cynical. But before donors turn a cold shoulder, they should remember there are plenty of charities doing important and much-needed work on reservations. "There are so many of them out there," Bellecourt says. "We would urge anyone that might want to give money to these charities to check on their credibility."

Donors can weed out suspect charities by looking at their spending habits, which are listed online by a number of charity watchdogs like, [www.charitywatch.org](http://www.charitywatch.org), [www.guidestar.com](http://www.guidestar.com) and [www.give.org](http://www.give.org).

But according to Reynolds of the First Nations Development Institute, one of the first things to look for is whether a group makes outlandish claims about the dire situation of Indians. "If they're claiming that Indian people and Indian kids are starving or without food, without blankets or without hope, they're probably not legitimate," he says. "There's a great deal of dignity on reservations, and I can't think of a single Native American-controlled organization that would be able to retain the support of its constituents by making claims like these." ■

Koren Capozza is a San Francisco-based journalist who is currently in the Arctic reporting on environmental issues.



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# Haider's Raiders

By Martin A. Lee

**F**riedrich Hebbel, the great Austrian dramatist of the 19th century, described his country as "the small world in which the great world holds rehearsal." If that's the case, we're in trouble.

A year ago, the far-right Freedom Party, led by Jorg Haider, shocked Europe when it joined the Austrian government as an equal coalition partner. A Porsche-driving pseudo-populist firebrand, Haider built his party into a major political force by scapegoating immigrants and trawling the sewers of ethnic prejudice for votes.

Shocking levels of anti-Semitism persist today in Austria, where, according to a survey published by the newsweekly *Gor*, 50 percent of the population believe that Jews were responsible for their own persecution, and 37 percent say they are "not sure" they could shake hands with a Jew. Catering shamelessly to this constituency, the Freedom Party emerged as the top vote-getter among the Austrian working class and people under 30, in what proved to be the strongest showing of a right-wing extremist movement in Western Europe since World War II.

But the Haider juggernaut encountered significant resistance as soon as the conservative People's Party of Austria broke its pre-election promise and formed a controversial alliance with the Freedom Party. The European Union immediately imposed diplomatic sanctions. And more than 100,000 demonstrators gathered in Vienna on February 20, 2000 to protest the new regime.

Yet all this just gave Haider more fuel. Resigning as head of the Freedom Party, he passed the baton to Susanne Riess-Passer, Austria's vice-chancellor, otherwise known as "the king's cobra." Haider remained the party's behind-the-scenes boss, while ruling as governor in the southern province of Carinthia. Taking aim at his critics, he declared that any political figure who supported E.U. sanctions against Austria should be prosecuted for "political treason," and he launched more than 100 libel suits against journalists, artists and academics as part of a far-ranging effort to intimidate and muzzle dissenting voices. Gerhard Botz, a leading Austrian historian of the Nazi era, accused Haider of endangering freedom of speech by attempting to "criminalize" his critics.

Haider's defamation suits often ended up with judges who were viewed as friendly to the Freedom Party. For legal representation in these cases, Haider turned to the former law

firm of his Freedom Party confidant, Dieter Boehmdorfer, the current justice minister who formerly served as Haider's personal attorney.

Boehmdorfer's performance as Austria's attorney general has been so odious that he alone among cabinet officials was singled out for condemnation in a report by three "wise men" from the European Union who were asked to assess the impact of the diplomatic boycott against Austria. But



"I declare hunting season on those who are hunting us," says Jorg Haider.

the trio of experts concluded that such measures had become counterproductive by encouraging just the kind of xenophobic and reactionary sentiment they were designed to punish. Based on their recommendation, the sanctions were lifted in September.

Haider gloated at the European Union's tactical blunder, while Boehmdorfer issued veiled threats against Freedom Party detractors. "Even the freedom of the press has its limits," the justice minister declared.

**V**owing to stop "biased" reporting, Haider's minions in the government set up a regulatory body to monitor the "objectivity" of the country's national broadcast media. Austrian state television and radio were deluged with complaints from Freedom Party stalwarts. "There has always been a degree of interference, but of late it has reached an unprecedented dimension," Daniella Spera, Austrian TV's main news



anchor, disclosed in October. "Top politicians are calling so regularly it is nearly impossible to work."

Numerous print media professionals also complained of personal attempts at intimidation by government officials. In November, the Austrian journalists' association warned that press freedom was at risk after the Freedom Party launched a vicious verbal attack against the Austrian Press Agency over a dispatch that ruffled Haider's feathers. "You can't blame the reporter when the facts do not please you," responded Astrid Zimmerman, head of the Austrian journalists' trade union.

The art and culture scene was also subjected to an array of repressive policies, including the termination of state subsidies for numerous cultural workers and progressive social programs. The Independent Women's Forum in Vienna, for example, saw 80 percent of its budget dry up overnight. Many of the victims of the funding cuts—from community radio stations to independent theater groups—had one thing in common: their opposition to the government.

"Austria doesn't have a very big tradition of dissenting, democratic structures, and I'm very concerned about the consequences," says Konrad Becker, head of Public Netbase, a community Internet service that provides online facilities for more than 1,200 cultural and political projects. Netbase had its funding slashed last April.

Hubsy Kramar, a stand-up comedian, also has been targeted for retribution by the Freedom Party. Kramar dressed in Nazi regalia as part of an anti-Haider parody; he was subsequently arrested and charged with violating the law against displaying fascist symbols. Yet no one gets arrested at annual meetings of Waffen-SS veterans in Austria, where Nazi medallions are worn in earnest.

Haider has spoken at such events on several occasions, always to an appreciative audience. German television clips have showed him praising the "decency" of the notoriously brutal Waffen-SS. Although he caught a lot of flack for this, Haider did not recant. Late last year, he caused another stir when he addressed a mountaintop reunion of SS members and other Hitler soldiers. Haider described the Third Reich veterans as "good citizens who had sacrificed their youth."

The Freedom Party's aggressive cultural strategy is the brainchild of Andreas Molzer, Haider's adviser on cultural affairs. Until recently, this Rasputin-like figure was the publisher of *Zur Zeit*, a virulently racist Vienna newsweekly, which rages about "the dogma of the 6 million murdered Jews" and celebrates the "epoch-making economic and political successes of the great social revolutionary," a reference to Adolf Hitler.

Emboldened by the fact that few Austrian politicians would condemn openly racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic

material in the media, Haider went for the jugular. He called for a ban on all anti-government demonstrations and backed new laws to allow increased police surveillance and eavesdropping on private citizens.

But it appears that Haider, in his zeal to strangle dissent, may have gotten carried away. In October, several top Freedom Party officials, including Haider and Boehmdorfer, were accused of paying police for confidential files on their political rivals and critics. The bribery charges were triggered by the publication of a devastating book by Josef Kleindienst, a disillusioned Haider acolyte and former head of a police union affiliated with the Freedom Party. Titled *I Confess*, the book detailed how sympathetic police officers were bribed to provide information about Haider's foes. "Of course, it was clear we were breaking the law," Kleindienst acknowledged, "but it was more important to help the party fight its enemies."

More than 80 police officers were implicated in what became known as "the spy affair." Eleven police working with a senior intelligence unit were suspended from active duty pending the outcome of an inquiry by state prosecutors. Boehmdorfer quickly proclaimed that Haider was "above suspicion," a comment that raised concerns of political meddling in the judiciary; this February, Haider's lawyer announced that investigations into his role in the police spying scandal had been dropped.

But several officials remain under scrutiny, including Hilmar Kabas, the erstwhile leader of the Freedom Party's Vienna branch. Kabas reportedly ran an extensive spy network that purloined data from police computers on a regular basis. He resigned his party post in January amid disclosures that he spent an evening in a Vienna brothel (courtesy of the Austrian taxpayers).

All this was not good news for a political party that had campaigned loudly against government corruption and "criminal foreigners." Nor did the government's harsh spending cuts and ambitious privatization program go over well after the Freedom Party had promised to fight for the "little man." Recent setbacks in two regional elections confirmed that the party

is suffering a popularity slump. But the charismatic Haider has a long record of rebounding from adversity.

Tens of thousands of protesters gathered once again in Vienna last month—just as they have been doing on a weekly basis throughout the Freedom Party's turbulent first year in power. "The fundamental concerns have not changed," says Max Koch, head of SOS Mitmensch, one of the groups coordinating the demonstrations. "Attitudes toward foreigners, Thatcherite changes in social spending and the work force, regressive policies regarding women, the year has not been a good one for Austria."

True to form, Haider lashed out at the opposition. "You have to understand, our enemies have declared war on us," he told a recent gathering of Freedom Party faithful. "I declare hunting season on those who are hunting us." ■

Martin A. Lee is the author of *Acid Dreams* and *The Beast Reawakens*, a book about neofascism.

# Austria's Freedom Party strangles dissent

# The Battle of San Francisco

By Sandy Zipp

**T**his time it wasn't a fire engine that did the job. Last summer, walking down Valencia Street in San Francisco's Mission District, I came upon the newspaper-plastered windows of Radio Valencia, a neighborhood restau-

## Hollow City: The Siege of San Francisco and the Crisis of American Urbanism

By Rebecca Solnit

Photographs by Susan Schwartzberg

Verso

182 pages, \$27

rant cum art gallery and performance space. The empty storefront brought me up short; Radio Valencia was a place I could not imagine not being there. It was there when I moved to the city and the neighborhood, still there when I left almost five years later, and now it seemed that it had just been shuttered, as if it had existed until the very moment I came down the street—and then vanished.

Years before, those windows, the entire storefront in fact, had been rammed through by an errant pumper-truck. No one was hurt, and a picture of the fire engine lodged three feet deep in the café's window seats made the front-page of the papers. After it reopened, the owners made a toy fire truck shrine above the bar, commemorating their little urban misadventure. It was that kind of place. This time, though, the forces of destruction were not so dramatic, but all the more final for their clean silence. And no wry memorial remained to mark the restaurant's passing, only an angry spray-painted scrawl across the glass: "Another future dot com."

**W**elcome to San Francisco in the Age of the Internet. This is what a city of networked souls feels like. Long a "sanctuary for the queer, the eccentric, the creative, the radical," San Francisco is fast becoming a "hollow city," writes Rebecca Solnit. The city's distinct urban culture is eroding, she charges, under an onslaught of new-economy money.

It's a strange verdict on a place that has been riding the crest of the latest

wave. The last six or seven years ostensibly have been good ones for San Francisco. The city weathered the economic doldrums of the early '90s, and after 1994 and the proliferation of the World Wide Web, it emerged as the capital of the Internet economy, the hip northern cousin to Silicon Valley, living large off its square relatives' venture capital trust fund. Rents and property values are up—way up. Business is booming. The city just feels richer and busier, with more cars and construction and less visible urban squalor.

Formerly "marginal" neighborhoods, like the largely Latino Mission, have become ground zero for new business and residential development. But the last four or five years have seen a rising tide of gentrification panic as major office pro-

writes, "the young go to invent themselves and from which cultural innovation and insurrection arise."

*Hollow City* is a "report from the front lines," a hastily assembled collection of essays by Solnit and photos by Susan Schwartzberg that documents the threat to San Francisco's grassroots arts and political cultures, as well as the gathering efforts to preserve them. Solnit writes: "Whatever the Internet may be bringing the masses stranded far from civilization, the Internet economy in its capital is producing a massive cultural die-off, not a flowering. ... What is happening here eats out the heart of the city from the inside ... a siphoning off of diversity, cultural life, memory, complexity."

Institutions that support political and cultural life—galleries, dance studios,



COURTESY GALERIA DE LA RAZA AND THE ARTISTS

jects for high-tech and biotechnology firms went forward; builders threw up a rash of designer "live/work" spaces all around the neighborhood's industrial fringes. Besieged on all sides, the Mission's working-class, immigrant and bohemian residents and institutions have been evicted, priced out and spread to the wind. Gradually, though, these forces are regrouping; they are forming unlikely, fragile alliances to save these in-between neighborhoods, places where, as Solnit

nonprofits, practice spaces, cooperatives, free schools, collective spaces—are threatened by massive rent hikes. People, particularly artists, immigrants, politicians and other insufficiently upwardly mobile sorts, are being evicted or driven out. It's becoming harder to live a marginal life—by choice or necessity—in the city that has raised that dubious calling to an art form. For Solnit, San Francisco and other cities jump-started by high-tech cash are harbingers of a new



urban order. Dot-com pre-fab warehouse redesigns and boho theme-park districts represent an assault on unpredictable public space. They require people whose worlds revolve around careers, virtual spaces and transportable lifestyles, not neighborhoods; they make cities that work like suburbs. In this new city, Solnit says, "Wealth has proven able to ravage cities as well as or better than poverty."

**G**entrification is just the latest facet of a decades-long process, one that originated as a response to "urban crisis" and suburbanization. In cities like New York or San Francisco, major financial interests—banks, foundations, insurance companies, hospitals, universities and corporations—have long tried to preserve their investments and infrastructure by cozying up to city officials, commandeering zoning procedures or federal urban renewal initiatives and generally buying up land. Massive amounts of federal dollars dropped on slum clearance projects and public housing schemes failed to eradicate poverty and reinforced racial segregation, while deepening the economic isolation of already poor neighborhoods.

In the '60s, '70s and '80s, while the ghettos burned, welfare rolls thickened, and the economy surged and fell and surged again, those interests that wouldn't or couldn't decamp to the suburbs consolidated San Francisco's Financial District and vast parts of Manhattan's southern tip and middle reaches into white-collar office precincts. Vibrant blue-collar cities—that once had only small extremes of wealth and poverty—became increasingly divided between riches and lack.

Gentrification simply represents the city's rescue on these terms. It should be no surprise then that these bifurcated metropolises of the postwar era—one part ghetto, one part office district with a shrinking working class and fleeing middle class in-between—are being transformed into upmarket monocultures. In the late '60s and '70s, a small portion of the middle classes began returning to the city to live as well as work—even as the politicians and newsmen announced the onset of an "urban crisis." Real estate speculation in residential and commercial property returned to the neighborhoods of urban America in halting increments over the past 30 years, in a mounting

series of booms felt most acutely in the profits of owners, the rents of tenants, and the prices all of us pay for everything from a meal to a lost sense of civic culture.

Gentrification represents the triumph of those forces that learned to preserve themselves in times of urban poverty. Not surprisingly, that poverty has not been banished. It's only harder to see and more

**In the extremes of  
the new economy,  
"wealth has proven  
able to ravage cities  
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than poverty."**

isolated as it seeps out into the suburbs, entrenches in the housing projects that have yet to meet the wrecking ball, or transforms into the spiritual poverty of a city leveled and made simple as it gorges on the heady sureties of newfound wealth.

**G**entrification scares are endemic to the culture of neighborhoods like the Mission. Aware bohemians are self-conscious about their role in changing the barrio, and many Latino residents, while they welcome the business, are unmistakably wary of white newcomers.

When I arrived in San Francisco—before the Web in a time of scarce jobs and somewhat affordable rents—a friend was writing the "oral ourstory" of Studio 4, a residential collective and illegal performance space at 18th and York. Part of this process was a sort of ritual self-examination—one that is repeated again and again by successive waves of white artists and politicians moving into lower-income communities of color. Studio 4 had been there for almost nine years, but could never escape the inevitable truth that the neighborhood was changing because of their presence. My friend and his fellow collective members understood that they were "pawns in a big real estate game," and that places like Studio 4 or Radio Valencia (probably a step further on the gentrification chain) block-bust the neighborhood and make it safe for the real money.

Studio 4 considered a number of strategies to drive out the yuppie incursion:

graffiti binges, fires in trash cans, vandalizing newcomers' cars, and leaving trash, old furniture and excrement in the streets. They even proposed staging fake drive-by shootings and drug deals on their block. In the end, they realized that street theater and trashing an already taxed block was no substitute for the actual work of organizing, for reaching out to their Latino neighbors—and maybe even the drug dealers and prostitutes—to try to find some common ground.

Studio 4 disbanded in the early '90s, and that northeastern corner of the Mission has been hit hard in the recent dot-com boom. Still, Studio 4's anti-gentrification efforts have their legacies too. Solnit and Schwartzberg document—and criticize—pranksters like the Mission Yuppie Eradication Project, whose street posters urge the trashing of SUVs to "drive these cigar bar clowns back to Orinda and Walnut Creek where they belong." The Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition, a confederation of artists, housing advocates and Latino activists, have staged marches, protests and even a brief takeover of a dot-com office in a Mission Street building that once housed nonprofits. A ballot initiative to limit or end office growth in certain hard-hit neighborhoods did not pass in November, but a slate of progressive city supervisors did. Now that they have a majority, plans are afoot to legislate growth controls over pro-development Mayor Willie Brown's veto.

For her part, Solnit is reluctant to "blame" artists for gentrification. "Gentrification is like air pollution," she writes. "A lot of unlinked individuals make contributions whose effect is only cumulatively disastrous. One can blame artists and drivers for those cumulative effects, but such effects are not their intention." Still, she reveals that in 1988 a group of San Francisco artists "managed to get a measure passed that allowed them to build or convert in regions zoned for industry, to circumvent building codes, and to avoid affordable housing stipulations and a significant portion of school taxes."

Ignoring the warnings of housing advocates, these artists organized to opt out of the social contract—and it came back to haunt them. The flood of overpriced live/work "lawyer lofts" poured through this very loophole. Of course, this is only

one part of the story. Surely artists and their ilk are not entirely to blame—little is said here about landlords, for instance. But maybe Solnit soft-pedals the bohemian factor in gentrification for, in part, deep and abiding emotional reasons. She believes in San Francisco. For her and other longtime San Franciscans the place is an ideal. It's fragile and flawed perhaps, but still a "visionary city."

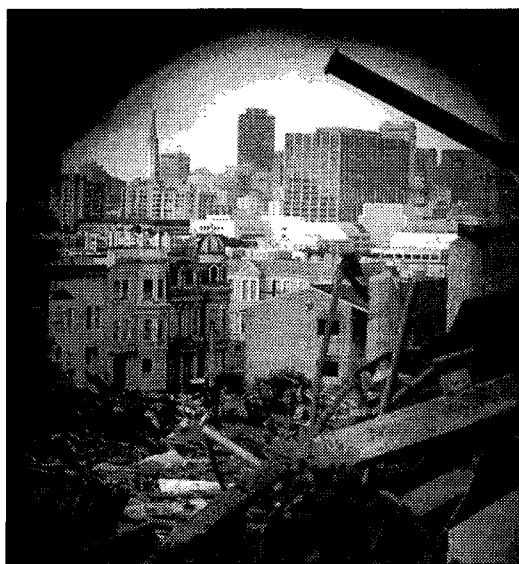
I'll admit to being somewhat impatient with such self-struck Bay Area righteousness. As much as I feel the city—its streets, vistas and the taste of its air—in me now, San Francisco can also be more than a little precious. Less Cotton Mather perhaps (as Kenneth Rexroth once said) but a little too much Ken Kesey. In one sense it's an ephemeral city, whose daily inundation of fog seems to come and go in time to the ebb and flow of fashions, commitments and images. Even places I'm fond of, like Radio Valencia, can seem little different from the boutiques, bistros and "cigar bars" that have come to clog Valencia and 16th Streets these days.

No doubt that when the cultural history of the '90s is written and the indelible ties between the "alt-culture" boom and the dot-com boom are made plain, San Francisco will provide the setting. Too often it's a city on display, fascinated with its own indulgence in the accoutrements of disaffection, or increasingly, placeless cosmopolitan sophistication. But this is the trick with San Francisco. From another view, Solnit is right, and with a little digging and time these surfaces reveal depths.

The legacies of the cultural, social and political movements that have left their mark on San Francisco remain today, and their spheres of influence have grown evermore intermingled. The city's cultural foundations are set several generations deep in the shifting sands, bedrock schist and landfill beneath its narrow peninsula. From City Lights Books to a number of feminist and lesbian community spaces to punk collectives to hip-hop activist groups to the Mission's Latino mural movement, it would be hard to entirely separate out white middle-class bohemian newcomers from people of color. In the terms Solnit favors, there is an inter-

connected "ecosystem" of cultural life; real-estate speculation is like an invading algae choking out the diversity and variety with singular fervor.

Solnit is also careful to point out that, for better or worse, art scene hipsters and IPO babies can easily inhabit one and the same body. In San Francisco, I was both bike messenger and hypertext mill-hand at one time or another; it seems simplistic to single out particular "types" of people for blame or admiration. Still,



SUSAN SCHWARTZENBERG

preserving the threatened city will take sacrifice on the part of some artists and upwardly mobile sorts who might otherwise prosper from the city's economic success. It will take the kind of political organization that requires people to recognize differences but forge solidarity.

Solnit and Schwartzberg's idealism is not the only thing that makes this political alliance a hopeful possibility. Imaginations that can evoke place with such integrity must surely have some success in shaping those places as well. Schwartzberg's photo collections do their job here, both as illustrations of Solnit's piece and as critical reflections on the ambiguous nature of the loss of places one values—or never knew mattered until they had been transformed. She also brings in the work of photographers who produced "San Francisco in Chains"—a project documenting the Starbucks deluge (there are now about 60 around the city) and the businesses they displaced.

*Hollow City* was written quickly, and the prose often suffers in comparison to

*Savage Dreams*, Solnit's crucial and moving essay on the confluence of politics and landscape in Yosemite and the Nevada Test Site. Still, Solnit remains one of the foremost writers on place working today. "Cities," she writes, "are the infrastructure of shared experience." They thrive because in them people "share public goods—public parks, libraries, streets, cafes, plazas, schools, transit—and in the course of sharing them, become part of a community, become citizens." And in time place can exert a subtle yet forceful pull in the mind and heart. "For those who spend years in a place," Solnit says, "their own autobiography becomes embedded in it so that the place becomes a text they can read to remember themselves. ... When culture and memory are evicted from a city, its places, its locations and its products become mute commodities that can be purchased but not dreamed."

The bloom is off the Web rose now, and some hope a recession, whatever its larger regrettable effects, might turn the tide. Anecdotal evidence suggests that commercial starts have fallen off in the last few months, but evictions and rent hikes continue. High-tech is in San Francisco to stay; now it's a matter of whether the city can find a political way to reconcile growth, wealth and equality. Some feel that growth controls will have ripple effects in the housing market, further discouraging the construction of low-income housing. Others respond that these limits will spur small-business job growth and allow rents to settle.

Either way, in the twilight of the "long boom," a certain ineffable sadness hovers in the streets of San Francisco. Perhaps these are merely the weightless cavils of nostalgia and escaping youth, the refusal to accept and move with change, but that hardly depletes the force with which Solnit and Schwartzberg convey the costs of loss. Whatever the future holds, the legacy of loss will remain. It is unavoidable, because it is written in stone, steel and glass in the cityscape.

Last summer, walking through some familiar reaches of South of Market near downtown, I lost my bearings. These were streets I had traversed countless times on my bike delivering packages in years past, but it seemed



now as if only a shadow or hint of that place remained. Empty lots had been filled, buildings I used to go in and out of daily were gone and replaced with new glass towers. Telling details remained, but the context, the background, had morphed. Spaces where I intuitively expected to see sky were filled with glass and steel; old masonry street fronts were now open, antiseptic plazas.

I stopped at a corner before a vacant lot jumbled with demolition equipment, trying to remember what had been there before. Towering above the lot was an immense white banner, one of those massive, austere Apple Macintosh ads commanding us to "Think Different." It rippled down the entire flank of an old,

guttured five- or six-story building, whose facade had been pulled away to expose the orderly, crude masonry grid of its floors and rooms to the street below. Here, then, was the new economy sweeping away the useless infrastructure of the old, the champions' banner erected already over the ruins of an outmoded world. But the banner, like so much in this city taken by Solnit's quiet "siege," had been unable to hold fast in the storm of progress. One corner had come unmoored from its pins. Loosed and noisy, it fluttered and flapped remorselessly among the wrecking cranes in a darkening wind that blew the afternoon fog off the ocean, over Twin Peaks and across the last of the day's sun. ■

matic light—perhaps the middle-aged father, "NJ" (Wu Nienjen), whose circumstances seem most in flux: a partnership in a computer company teetering on the edge of bankruptcy, plus some precarious second-guessing that comes after a charged encounter with an old flame. (Wu's performance is a complex marvel of domestic befuddlement yielding to spontaneity.) But such a single identification would be a violation of the film's most provocative gesture, a complete eschewal of close-ups, revealing in their absence the directorial manipulations of even the most sensitive of family albums like Ingmar Bergman's *Fanny and Alexander*.

Magically, the effect isn't cold or distancing, but a portal to a deeper way in; Yang seems to have discovered that by taking several steps back, he can embrace all his players' interiors at once—a community of privacies. This is filmmaking at its most graciously egalitarian. It's also tribute to a superb company of actors who fill the spatial remove with tender uncertainties: NJ's wife Min-Min (Elaine Jin) breaks down before our eyes as she grasps futilely to convey her daily routine to her mother in a coma; their teen-age daughter Ting-Ting (Kelly Lee, fearlessly naïve), awkwardly embarks on a first date; her inquisitive kid brother Yang-Yang (Jonathan Chang, eight years old and already formidable) possesses a

## A Family in Full

By Joshua Rothkopf

It's hard to imagine a Taiwanese saga soaring into American movie theaters these days without the benefit of wires, as hung in so many of Asia's gravity-defying, better-known exports. But wouldn't it be nice if Edward Yang's masterful family drama *Yi Yi*, already lauded at Cannes and around the world, proved the exception? There's no kicking, crouching

birth) do justice to its gradual unfolding of reaction and response. Like an early establishing shot that slides intimately across the cozy Jian household—from Grandma seen reclining unsteadily through her open bedroom door, to the living room table set for dinner, to Daddy's hand opening the front door—it's what's densely in between that matters.

The temptation is great to try to find a prismatic character to focus all this dra-

**Yi Yi (A One and a Two)**  
Written and directed by  
Edward Yang

or hiding here: only the dignified bearing of the modern world by one extended Taipei clan, the Jians. Yang's triumph lies in his deepening of their everyday trials into something profound; *Yi Yi* is several lives beautifully observed and quietly made sacred—to watch them evolve over three hours is to realize how much more films could be (or might have been) if they spoke instead of shouted.

*Yi Yi* translates closer to "one-one" or "individually," and while Yang's chosen English-language title, *A One and a Two*, captures much of his film's easy-going pulse—the continuum of life, both inexorable and comforting—its true subject has less to do with pace than nuance, the richness of personal experience. Nor will a simple recounting of structural essentials (*Yi Yi* starts with a wedding, ends with a funeral and is neatly halved by a



"I can only see what's in front, not behind."

strange serenity even while grappling with some rather advanced philosophical questions with the help of a still camera: "I can only see what's in front, not behind."

**C**hoice and fate play out in an electric city: Taipei, with its roiling economy of digital fortunes, seems to inform the push and pull of Yang's orchestration of mood. A bluish image of a fetus kicking in a sonogram plays over a business pitch for a new computer game promising "the limitless future." (Yang, who studied computer science, provides examples of technology mirroring life that are uncommonly sophisticated and humane.) Glinting streetlights reflected in glass strike refreshing resonance with the natural world's sparks; as in the recently released *In the Mood for Love*, rainstorms signal

not gloom but charged-up passions. In one scene, Yang-Yang slips into a darkened classroom of girls watching an educational film about the origins of life; we're witnessing nothing less than his sexual awakening.

Another thread subtly woven through *Yi Yi* concerns music—more specifically the refinement involved in echoing the melodies of others (presented as both enviable and hurtful). Two great artists emerge from the film's periphery: Mr. Ota (Issey Ogata, his voice a beautiful purr), a Japanese computer genius hoping to contract with NJ's company, and Lili (Adrian Lin), Ting-Ting's slightly older neighbor, a cellist. Both make indirect overtures to their new friends (Ota, in particular, casts an unbreakable spell over a raucous piano bar—and the entire

film—with a darkly romantic rendition of the "Moonlight Sonata") and inspire them to follow their own pursuits of the heart. Love though, like music, has its own tricky rhythms, and Yang only deepens the theme with every tenuous step: Father and daughter, two unsteady soloists, are cross-cut on separate dates in the film's tour-de-force conclusion.

There hasn't been a film in years that has so purely devoted itself to the dreams and anxieties of the middle class. For good measure, *Yi Yi* also includes moments of sheer exuberance: a rollicking marriage procession that's almost deliriously giddy amid the hot-pink decor of a banquet hall; a well-deserved soaking of a nasty teacher with a water balloon. A review can only sketch what the rarest of films do so fully. This is one of them. ■

## Brains and Booty

By Evan Endicott

**T**ortoise are the undisputed leaders of a new movement in modern music, dubbed "post-rock" by journalists and "math-rock" by fans and detractors alike (depending on how well they did in undergraduate calculus courses,

### Standards

Tortoise  
Thrill Jockey

### Who Stole the I Walkman?

Isotope 217  
Thrill Jockey

es, I presume). Theoretically, post-rock is a reaction against all rock music that came before, a bold assault against three-chord anthems, heavy-metal guitar solos and lung-bursting vocal histrionics. Or more to the point: "No big hair!"

But Tortoise have never claimed to be anything more than a rock band. To position them as post-anything is to flatly ignore the influence of a great many musicians who have clearly shaped their sound, from jazzbos John McLaughlin and Miles Davis to minimalist composers Steve Reich and Philip Glass. And if Tortoise's albums define a new school of musical thought, then it is an impossibly amorphous and fluid one, as no two Tortoise LPs sound alike.

When Tortoise emerged from the Chicago scene's primordial soup in 1993, it was a bass-and-drums studio project concocted by Johnny Herndon (drums) and Doug McCombs (bass). Their idea, to abandon guitars and create a form of music based solely on the propulsion of rhythm, was boldly reductionist, but not without precedent. Heavily influenced by the dual rhythm juggernauts of Chicago's Shellac and Louisville's Slint, Tortoise's self-titled debut LP innovatively mixed percussive thrust and droning keyboard textures. Based on this work alone, the idea of post-rock was born: Rock 'n' roll's typical conventions (Chuck Berry's double-stopped guitar leads plus R&B's insinuating vocals) had been stripped away to reveal the barest bones of the music. But even as the post-rock label was being affixed to their shell, Tortoise were beginning to evolve into a larger, more complicated organism.

Shortly before recording their 1994 debut, Herndon and McCombs sought out musical assistance from local musicians John McEntire and Bundy Brown. McEntire's arrival marks a crucial juncture in the development of the band. Having studied computers and music technology in college, McEntire helped the group realize its "studio band" aspirations. With

McEntire manning the boards, Tortoise's raw rhythms were transformed into something infinitely more complex: cavernous, dub-influenced layers of bass and drums that create alternating waves of tension and release, moving in tidal patterns across the listener's headphones.

The 1996 LP *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* was a radical departure, in which the group fulfilled the promise of

**If they define a new school of musical thought, it is an impossibly fluid one, since no two Tortoise albums sound alike.**

its name. "Djed," the album's epic opener, unfolds at a glacial pace, beginning with ripples of static, evolving into a massive wave of minimalist vibe melodies, and receding just as surely as it came, leaving traces of foamy static on its sonic shores.

Having exhausted the slow-and-steady theory of composition, Tortoise took another radical turn on *TNT*, released in 1998. Jeff Parker, a Chicago jazz guitarist, joined the fold, and the band composed the majority of the album's material in the studio, using ProTools software to cut and paste improvised bits into a cohesive





Tortoise have high Standards.

whole. The result, born of an arduous, year-long recording process, was an almost incomprehensibly dense record. Each sound and sonic detail had been manipulated, edited and tweaked to perfection. *TNT*'s beauty is its infinite depth—unraveling over repeated listens, the album reveals secrets with every spin.

But the endless vista that technology opened on *TNT* was also a perilous threat. Critics assailed it as too studied and too intellectual, robbing jazz of its spontaneous magic and reducing it to a rote musical exercise.

On *Standards*, Tortoise's new LP, the group appears to have reinvented itself again. The irony of the album's title is obvious from its first notes on "Seneca," as Parker's distorted, warbling guitar feeds back with Hendrixian glee and Herndon bashes away at the traps with reckless abandon. It's a cacophonous racket that resolves itself with a sort of warped melodic logic, and the most furious bit of music Tortoise have ever recorded. Two minutes in, a complex Herndon beat locks the band in step and the trademark Tortoise guitar sound (warbly and thick, like an underwater bell tower striking high noon) appears, reassuring the listener that the band is still alive and kicking beneath all the bombast.

There is uncharacteristic immediacy here, but it shouldn't be mistaken for sloppiness or spontaneity. As much as *Standards* expands Tortoise's sonic palette,

it is ultimately a record of intricately woven compositions. Take "Benway," the third track on *Standards*. Beginning with a series of drum 'n' bass percussion clicks and the most prominent synthesizer line in Tortoise's canon, the track's brooding vibe suddenly resolves into a *TNT*-like bit of repetitive riffage. Vibes and guitar lock into a minimalist major key motif that turns itself around into a jazzy bit of discordant skronk. In less than five minutes, Tortoise successfully synthesize the last two decades of experimental and improvisational music; and it's not nearly as intellectual as that sounds. This is mind music that moves the booty as well.

"Monica" marks Tortoise's return to confounding mode, as the group exchanges its underwater warble for something resembling French house music. As the disco ball drops and diamonds of light glimmer and spin, a vocoder gurgles over New Age synth swells. But once again, Tortoise seamlessly change directions, from disco to electro-jazz, with time left for brief excursions into trip-hop and horn-infected dub.

*Standards* is a deceptive animal. Some listeners will hear the violent guitar stabs that open the album and declare that Tortoise have launched a punk-rock assault against their critics, but beneath the newly painted shell resides the same thoughtful, patient beast that reinvented rock music. While *TNT* was dense, diverse and mysterious, *Standards* is forceful and cohesive. Over the course of the album's 10 tracks,

Tortoise merge disparate elements like flamenco guitar, hand claps, analog synth burbles and backward tape loops into a seamless, harmonious whole.

For a more radical revision of post-rock's sound, listeners should tune into Isotope 217. Major players in Chicago's free-jazz, post-rock scene for the past four years, Isotope 217's revolving lineup has recently become almost identical to Tortoise itself. Herndon, Parker and (Tortoise percussionist) Dan Bitney are all members, and McEntire runs the boards, but the distinct presence of cornet player Rob Mazurek prevents the two bands from becoming sonic Siamese twins.

Isotope's 1997 debut album, *The Unstable Molecule*, was a melting pot of electric Miles and U.K. downbeat trip-hop stylings. Cornet and trombone added a jazzy, speakeasy feel lacking on Tortoise's early work, and the group's occasional ventures into the realm of funk (check the Bootsy Collins-inspired bass work on "Phonometrics") further distinguished the group from its Chicago brethren.

Their latest disc, *Who Stole the I Walkman?*, could hardly be further from their roots. With the departure of trombonist Sara P. Smith after *Molecule*, Isotope's horn-heavy sound has been slowly replaced by sound effects, samples and studio manipulation. Thanks in large part to Mazurek abandoning his cornet for his laptop, Isotope's sound has become more synthesized and alien, floating across Kubrickian space vistas like an extraterrestrial transmission. Where horns once swooped and swooned, unidentifiable radar blips cavort, and the jazzy rim shots and brushed snares of *Molecule* and 1999's *Utonian Automatic* have been replaced with percussive clicks and skittering drum 'n' bass patterns. Moreover, the compositional structure of previous efforts has been done away with altogether. Ideas stack upon one another as grooves appear and disappear with impish levity.

"Meta Bass" mixes a traditional guitar and synth combo with a cumulus six-string attack, only to unexpectedly morph into a funky bass trance. "Moonlex" could be an alternate soundtrack to any one of a thousand different sci-fi docking sequences. Droning sub-frequencies, bleeping consoles, whirring machinery and oscillating hums conjure up crater-covered lunar landscapes.

The album's space-age kitchen sink approach is often more distracting than interesting, however. *Walkman* seems to resist repetition at all costs, leaving the listener to dangle while the good grooves pass on by. One of the few tunes to sustain a musical idea for an extended period is "Moot Ang," which also happens to be the most fusion-inflected track. As a 12-note guitar figure plods deliberately along, tribal percussion and moody horns build to a fever pitch until exploding like an angry hive of cyborg bees. It's a beautiful moment of barely controlled chaos and an all-too-infrequent revelation.

But even *Walkman*'s most awkward stabs at innovation are a welcome respite from the stagnant pop that rules the radio. Perhaps this is why Isotope 217, Tortoise (and their labelmates in the Sea and Cake, Brokeback and Trans Am) are perpetually set apart by music critics. For all their sonic disparity, these groups share two crucial features—the belief that rock 'n' roll remains a vital musical form and the creativity to prove it. ■

## Business

*Continued from page 30*

books in full color with hip graphics. Beyond that, it's time to put corporate platitudes about empowerment into action for ourselves.

Hamel's claims that smart businesses "let youth be heard," "listen to the periphery," and "let newcomers have their say" are hype that hide corporate hierarchies. But plenty of good, hard-working NGOs don't use the ideas and innovations of most of their people, either. For starters, groups could try out Hamel's suggestion that half the attendees at the next strategy meeting be people who have never been to one before. Next consider the promise that business makes whenever it talks about workplace "teams" or when Hamel proposes "listening to new voices." They're talking about people having a real say in what their employer is doing. They're talking about workplace democracy. While Hamel, like progressives, recognizes the payoff of giving

people a real voice, that's one strategy corporate America can never use. But a genuine, carefully crafted system of workplace democracy could produce for progressive organizations a wellspring of creative new strategies, successful projects and high morale.

Back in the corporate world, the next step would be to follow the advice of Hamel's pal Saul Alinsky, and hold companies to their promises. They want suggestions on improving the workplace? Great. Self-managing teams? Here we come. An end to old workplace hierarchies? Couldn't agree more. And a revolution from within the corporation? I'm so there.

I'm not sure that Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King would be the ideal employees Hamel imagines them to be. But they sure would be fun to sit next to during employee "empowerment" meetings. ■

*To get in touch with the authentic revolutionary vanguard, Greg Smithsimon has tempted at management consulting firms.*

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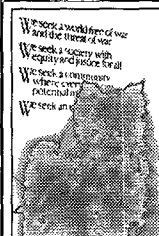
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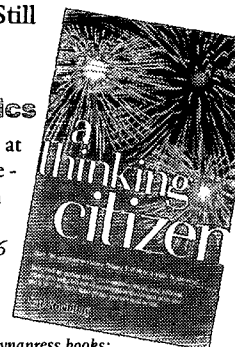
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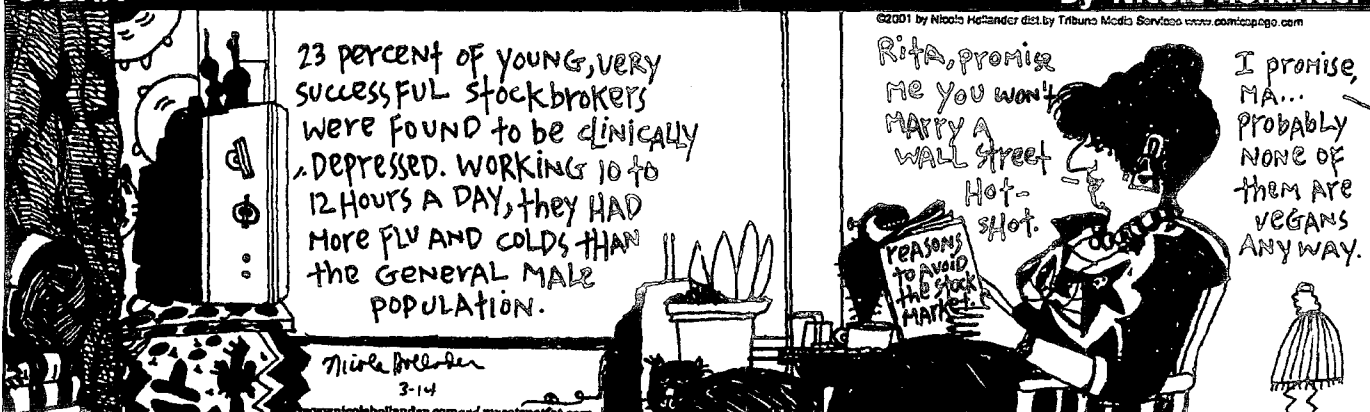
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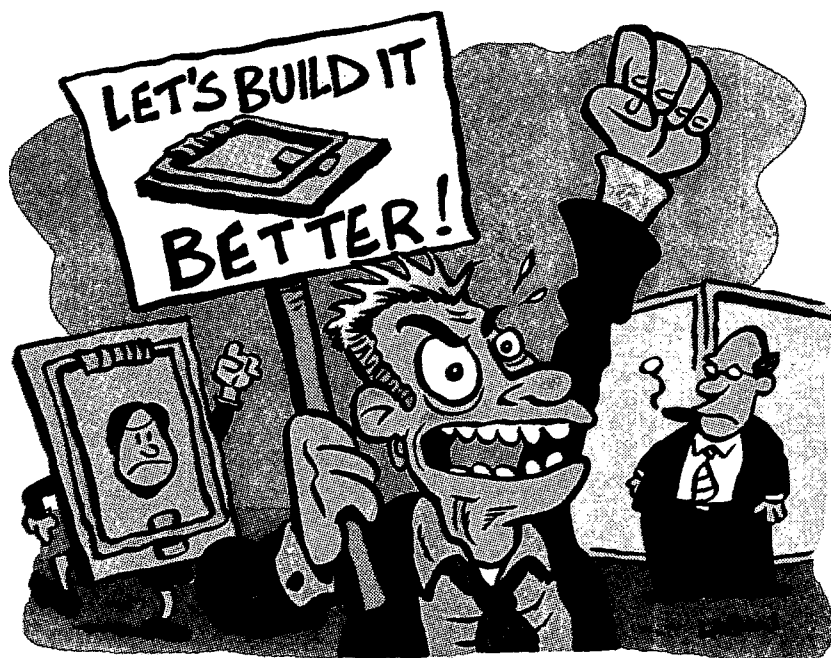


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## SYLVIA



# The Business of Revolution Is Business



By Greg Smithsimon

**H**ave you been inspired by the excitement of street protests that swept through Seattle, D.C., Prague, Philly and L.A.? Want to make those corporations take notice? Want to feel the energy, irreverence and fun of the coolest global movement since blue jeans? Then Gary Hamel's *Leading the Revolution* just might be for you. A no-holds-barred, practical handbook for revolutionaries, visionaries and activists, this book teaches the nuts and bolts of building coalitions, writing a manifesto and picking targets for a campaign. But watch out: Hamel won't let you rest easy in your armchair. "One person, one vote represents not the full ideal of democracy, but its most minimal precondition. If you exercise the rights of citizenship only once every four years, at the polling station, can you really claim to be a citizen?" Democracy means activists redirecting society toward their ideals—"be it feminism, environmentalism, [or] racial equality."

One hitch before you ask for it at your local book co-op. The jacket promises this to be "An action plan—indeed, an incendiary device" that will "ignite the passions of entry-level assistants, neophyte managers, seasoned VPs, CEOs." Those corporations took notice of the street protests, all right, and decided they were too exciting not to rip off. So steal this book they did. "Activists are the coolest people on the planet," Hamel recognizes, which is dandy as long as he can quietly redefine "activists" to mean people who work extra hard at their job.

This *Wall Street Journal* bestseller assures readers that it's every bit as exciting—hell, every bit as ennobling—to be the employee that convinces Sony to design a new audio chip as

it is to desegregate buses or liberate South Africa. This is the sexiest thing that's happened to engineers since they stopped carrying slide rules in their pockets: One minute, they're the ultimate cog in the wheel, the next minute, they're revolutionaries rubbing elbows with Hamel's role models: Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks, Vaclav Havel, and the founders of Amnesty International and Greenpeace. Revolutionaries or corporate motivators? "These are people who change the world. And you can't change your own company? Give me a break."

The book fires up readers with a practical guide on "how to start an insurrection." First you write a manifesto; Thomas Paine's work during the American Revolution is a good guide. Then you build a coalition to maximize your influence, just like "a labor union organizing a strike." Does "pick your targets ... co-opt and neutralize" sound like veteran organizer Saul Alinsky's "pick the target, freeze it, personalize it and polarize it"? It should.

Hamel calls Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals* a "classic." Likewise, "winning small" in the beginning to build momentum might as well have come from an ACORN community organizers' handbook. If executives have paid any attention to the protesters at their doors, they should already know Hamel's game plan. We've been running it against them for years.

What's hardest to swallow after reading the book is not that the counterculture has been ripped off yet again, with no royalties paid, or that the determination of environmentalists is

## Why change the world when you can work overtime for your boss?

presented as inspiration for corporations seeking to extend their dominance over the planet. The tough part is considering the possibility that there's something in here for progressives to steal back and profit from. OK, not much. *Leading the Revolution* mainly consists of some radical lingo ladled over the same lukewarm hash that's been sold in trendy business books for years. (The formula is for the head of a consulting firm, like Hamel, to write a book that tantalizes potential corporate clients into paying for the full story.) Personally, what I want to adopt is the business world's ability to print whole

*Continued on page 28*